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[THE SCENE IN FOULTER'S RENTS.]

THE SEVENTH MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Warning Voice," "Man and his Idol," "Mrs. Larkall's Boarding School," &c.

CHAPTER IV.

MISGIVINGS.

Thou hast made me giddy
With these ill-tidings.

King John.

THROUGHOUT the foggy night, and on into the struggling day which succeeded it, a light had burned in a second-floor window of a house in Eccleston Square.

The window had crimson curtains; but they were partially drawn aside, and the light was evidently set there as a beacon. But for the fog, it would have been visible across the square. As it was, its rays did not penetrate a yard into the thick night.

The room itself was in comparative darkness, owing to the lamp by which it should have been lit being appropriated to this beacon purpose.

That it was large, with a heavy paper on the walls, half-hidden under pictures in heavy frames, and that the furniture was cumbersome and antique, was nearly all that could be well made out.

A coke fire burned in the high grate, with a uniform red heat. It had no life in it—no flame danced or flickered over its surface. It warmed the room, and did nothing more. There was hardly glare enough from it to light up the faces of two persons who sat staring into it for hours, with only an occasional glance at the lamp, burning between the half-drawn crimson window-curtains.

Both these watchers were women.

The elder of them, who occupied a huge arm-chair covered with velvet, was considerably advanced in life; her hair was seamed with grey, her face wrinkled, and the hands which she crossed before her had lost the smooth plumpness which had made them beautiful in youth. But there was one quality of

which even age could not rob this woman, and that was a certain inborn grace and natural dignity of manner, which was like a patent of nobility—it stamped her a lady, born and bred.

The same quality distinguished her companion, who was, however, only upon the threshold of life. A casual stranger would have pronounced her a lady, as she sat with her face buried in her hands—the sweep of her white neck, the perfect pose of her figure, and the elegant arrangement of every fold of her dark dress betrayed the secret of good blood.

When she at length dropped her hands, and looked up, the pale, delicately-moulded face was sufficient to remove all doubt on the subject.

It was the perfection of aristocratic loveliness.

But we have already gazed upon it.

The face was that of Ada Lomax, who had that morning relinquished her freedom, and become the wife of Imrac Garmeson, the banker.

This was her wedding night!

And it was in this gloomy apartment, with a companion crushed beneath the agony of some great sorrow, that she was spending it!

Profound silence reigned in the house, as the two ladies sat over the coke fire; but at long intervals a footstep would sound in the street. Then they would look up, one at the other, with a mute interrogation of the eyes, and so listen, with suspended breath, till the sound died away, and the square was still again.

Once the footsteps stopped at the door, and they heard some one ascend the steps. At the same instant, both started to their feet.

"It is he!" the elder lady exclaimed.

A key was let into the street-door, and a man was heard to cross the passage and begin to ascend the stairs, indulging himself as he came with a suppressed whistle.

"No!"

It was the younger lady who spoke this time. The hearts of both, stirred under the impulse of momentary hope, sank within them. It was only some lodger in the house, who had returned late and merry.

"Four days!" exclaimed the elder lady. "Oh! Ada, I can endure this no longer. I must have hap-

pened to him, my boy, my darling boy? Why does he not write? Not a line—not a line! Two words would save my heart from breaking, and he will not write them. It is cruel—unnatural!"

"You can blame him, mother? You can believe that it is his fault?" said the fair girl, half-reproachfully.

"What am I to do or to think?" the mother asked with petulant earnestness.

"But he loves us so, mother!"

"We thought so," was the answer; "we thought that he would have died to save us a moment's pang, but we were deceived. Oh, cruel, cruel boy!"

"Pray calm yourself," said Ada. "I will not believe that Arthur is heartless!"

"I must, Ada, I must!"

"Must?"

"Yes, or I shall go mad. If we do not account for his silence by indifference to our feelings, there is but one other alternative, and that I dare not think of. If I fancied that anything had happened to him, it would kill me."

"Arthur will come back, mother!" cried Ada, falling on her knees, and clasping her mother's hands in her own, which were so white and beautiful. In doing this, she involuntarily glanced at the fourth finger of her left hand. The ring was gone, but at the mere recollection of it, she shuddered as she had done when the banker placed it there. "He must come back, mother!" she repeated.

"I dare not think otherwise," was the answer.

"Something may have happened of which we have no idea. Arthur has been indefatigable in trying to get some appointment, by which he might add to our income. Up to this time he has failed; but who knows but something may be offered. The bare chance of something may have tempted him—"

"What! to leave his home for four days?"

"Tis strange, I own."

"Strange? 'Tis incredible. No, Ada, he is either weary of us and our quiet life, or he has fallen a victim to some danger, of which we have no conception. He may be dead! Oh! Ada, think—if our darling should be dead!"



The paroxysm of grief with which the fond mother uttered these words, moved the listener to tears. But what could she answer? The conversation had reference to the sudden disappearance of her brother Arthur—a handsome young fellow of twenty-two—four nights ago. He had gone out to dinner, and had not returned. The hour at which he had left the party had been ascertained, but nothing further was known of his movements.

Nothing, at least, which Ada Lomax could communicate to her mother.

What Ada knew of what had happened, guided her to some conclusion as to what might be happening; but this was her secret. She dared not mention what she knew or what she inferred.

Better anything than that.

"Better," she said, in her heart, "that my mother should perish of this horrible uncertainty than that she should know what I know, and surmise what I surmise."

The necessity of concealment rent the poor girl's heart.

Until that day she had never had a secret from her mother. Perfect confidence had always existed between them, and when this is the case, it is hard to begin to dissemble. It seems like deceit. Withholding the truth is so like falsifying the truth, that it requires practice to do it without pain.

It was, therefore, a positive relief when, after a pause, the subject was changed.

"This trial has shaken my nerves so," the mother said, "that I seem full of fears to-night. I wish your sister had not left us: this was no day for her to be abroad."

"She is with friends," was the quiet reply. "And it was only right that we should try every clue to discover what has become of Arthur. The Tresillians may have seen or heard of him. Constance is right in interesting them in the search."

"Yes, she is right; but I miss her in this hour of trial as I have never missed her before."

"She will return to us in the morning, dear," said Ada, tenderly.

"I hope so," was the querulous answer, "I hope so."

"And she may bring good news."

The mother shook her head, and sighed heavily. Four days of watching had told upon her heart, and she was beginning to yield herself up to despair.

The watchers relapsed into silence.

Hour succeeded hour. The light set in the window burned down to its socket. The coals fire smouldered into white ashes. The first faint streaks of grey were visible above the house-tops through the uncurtained window.

For the first time for four nights the mother slept.

As soon as she had ascertained this fact by the regular and heavy breathing, to which she listened intently, Ada Lomax rose, and moving toward the window, threw up her arms with an action expressive of intense relief.

"At last!" she muttered, in a whisper. "At last! Oh, the agony of these long, long hours of deception, and with this lying blustering here!"

She thrust her hand into her bosom, and drew thence a piece of folded paper. It was a marriage certificate, and was wrapped about a wedding-ring. Holding the paper so that the flickering light by the window might fall on it, she carefully read it through, printed and written matter alike; setting herself fiercely to the task, yet performing it with manifest loathing and abhorrence.

"I shall not forget," she said, as she finished. "Every word is burnt into my brain. I am this man's wife. He was a true prophet. He said the day would come when I should listen to him, and it has. Oh, God, that I should live to say 'it has'! But then, Arthur is saved. Let me think of that! Oh, let me think of that! I would have bought the evidence of his guilt with my life—and shall I begrudge my hand? No; I will not—I will only weary heaven with prayers that I may die before this man has power to claim me as his bride before the world."

She took the ring—the mere touch of which seemed to strike a chill to her heart—and once more folded it in the marriage certificate. Then she stole on tiptoe across the room, and dropped the packet through a crack in the worm-eaten wainscoting of the wall.

Slight as was the sound of the falling packet, it caused the sleeping lady to start up.

"Arthur!" she cried, involuntarily giving utterance to the name dearest to her heart.

Ada listened with a pang, and drew near her mother.

"Sleep, dear," she said; "try to sleep."

"I do but dream," she softly murmured, her eyes still weighed down with the drowsiness which had succeeded to four nights' watching. "Arthur is ever present, but separated by precipices, by rivers, always by some insurmountable barrier. And Constance is

in peril. Ah, save her, save her! The avalanche will crush her!"

A spasmodic start and shudder, then the lady sank again to rest, her countenance keenly watched by her daughter, whose sole craving, at that moment, was to be alone.

"Constance in peril," she mused, repeating mechanically to herself in an undertone the words to which she had just listened, "her words seem to echo my own thoughts. Again and again, since she left us yesterday, have I recalled her face with the look it wore as she quitted this room, and it has made me sad. Why? Was I right in surmising from her absent manner, her distraught looks, and strange replies, that she, too, had learned the secret of Arthur's shame? But how? Not from me, and surely not from him—how then? 'Tis incredible. Yet I never saw her so agitated as when she proposed the visit to the Tresillians. For hours she had looked wistfully from the window, as a bird from its cage; and at last that excuse for leaving us appeared to occur to her suddenly. She proposed it abruptly. She insisted on it more firmly than it is in her quiet nature to do. She overcame every argument, even that of the danger of the fog and wet. Some strong purpose must have moved her to this, something more than the mere chance of finding a clue to Arthur's fate. Surely Hamnet Tresillian has made no impression on her heart? And if he has, what have I to do with that?"

She stopped, and brushed the gathering tears from her eyelids with a sweep of her white hand.

"Yesterday I might have been hurt at the thought that even Constance cared for him. But not to-day. I have no right to indulge in any such thought to-day. I have forfeited my place in his heart by my own rash act, and henceforth he is nothing to me. Oh, Arthur, Arthur, may you never know the agony your sin has cost me!"

Tears choked her utterance. Bravely as she had borne up, anguish of mind and weariness of body had, at last done their worst. Utterly overcome, she sank down beside the old-fashioned couch, and, hiding her face upon it, indulged the bitter luxury of tears.

As the mother slept, and her child thus wept over her hapless fate, it grew broad daylight.

Presently a soft tap at the door startled Ada from her knees—it was the servant with the morning letters.

One instantly caught Ada's gaze. As she took it, a sensation as of swooning came over her; but she mastered it, and with a trembling hand tore open the envelope.

"From Hamnet's sister!" she said, looking at the signature.

Then she read over a few lines.

The note had been written at ten o'clock on the preceding night, and its purport was to express the deepest concern for Arthur Lomax's mysterious disappearance, and to invite one of the sisters, either Ada or Constance, to come down and talk over the matter, with a view to taking some decided step toward ascertaining what had become of the lost man.

There was nothing in the note itself to startle the fair being who read it; but, in connection with her previous reflections, it was significant and alarming.

It was clear that, at the hour at which it was written, Constance Lomax was not with the Tresillians.

Yet she had left with the expressed intention of visiting them.

And if she was not with them, where could she have passed the night?

At this question all her heart's misgivings revived, and she could not restrain a momentary outcry.

"Mother!" she exclaimed.

"My child!" ejaculated the mother, starting from her sleep.

But Ada already repented her impetuosity.

"Sleep, dear mother, sleep!" she said, cowering at her knees, and burying her face in her hands.

She was heart-sick at the thought of the moment when it must be necessary to add a pang to the anguish which already overburdened the mother's heart.

CHAPTER V.

THE ACCEPTED SUITOR.

One word he spoke, and only one;
But like a poisoned arrow, sent
Winged from the skilful archer's bow,
Straight to my quivering heart it went.

Ballad.

To enable the reader to understand fully the bearing of the incidents already narrated upon one another, and upon those which are to follow, it may be well here to say a word or two about the Lomax family.

In days gone by it had ranked as one of the first in Hampshire.

The family estate lay there, and there also was

situated the pocket borough, which used to return its member to Parliament at the bidding of the head of the family. There was a tradition of a Lomax of the good old times—before the Reform Bill was drafted—who had threatened to give his groom a seat in the House of Commons, unless the free and independent electors (who sold their votes openly at so much a head) consented to return an imbecile or obnoxious scion of the family. And there is no question but that the man would have kept his word, for the Lomax blood was hot and fiery, and, when once roused, was not easily cooled down.

To this characteristic the family owed its downfall. All that there was of fire, obstinacy, not to my mania, in the family had concentrated itself in a certain Sir Hugh Lomax, who lived a generation or two back, and he carried things with so high a hand, lived so extravagantly, and embroiled himself in so many law-suits, that he first impoverished the estate, and then became the cause of its being thrown into chancery.

What that meant in those days we all know.

The lawyers swallowed the oyster, the parties to the action got the shells, and thought themselves lucky if they were permitted to carry them away, since not a few suitors ended their days in the Debtors Prisons.

When the Lomax case was wound up, the head of the family was Gervase Lomax. He was still young, and had adopted the sea as a profession.

Chiefly through family interest he had risen to the rank of captain; but had not thoroughly devoted himself to the duties of his profession, since he lived in a perpetual delusion as to the chancery suit, and what it would do for him. He believed that it must some day be settled in his favour, and that then he should enter on the enjoyment of a fortune which, by perpetual nursing, must become colossal.

It was a dream; but, unfortunately, it exercised a baneful influence over his waking life.

One day the news reached him at Malta that the suit had come to an end, and that the chancellor's decision was in his favour.

Mad with excitement, he hurried home, and found the news confirmed. At the same time he learned, to his chagrin, that, though he was confirmed in the inheritance of the family estate, it had been so pillaged as to be absolutely worth nothing.

The discovery did not drive him to despair.

He bore it with outward calmness; but it had one terrible effect. He regarded himself as the victim of robbery and wrong, and as, thereby, freed from those moral obligations which cement the fabric of social life.

"Society has plundered me," he argued, "through one of its institutions; why should not I be revenged on society?"

Unhappily, he had already allied himself to a young and beautiful woman, of exalted family, a lady in her own right, and she had borne him one son. The wife was Lady Lomax, as she was always called, already introduced to us; her son was the young man Arthur, to whom reference has been made.

The wife and mother viewed with alarm the change which had come over her idolized husband.

She saw him suddenly throw up his profession, and plunge into the vortex of high life.

He lived at a rate so obviously beyond his means, that she shuddered at the bare idea of the consequences. The captain had his town and country houses, rode blood horses, played high, kept the most expensive and least reputable society, surrounded himself and wife with every luxury which imagination could devise or credit procure. And when the anxious wife inquired, as she sometimes did, "What is to pay for all this?" his answer was a cold, cynical laugh.

"I have been fleeced," he would say, "it is my turn to fleece now!"

It was during this shameful period of their father's life that his beautiful twin-children, Ada and Constance, were born. Even in the cradle the beauty of these children was remarkable; but not more so than their singular resemblance to each other. As they grew up, every year developed the germs of beauty, and the likeness between them became, if anything, still more striking.

While they were yet innocent darlings, playing about their mother's knee, the crash came.

All in a moment, Captain Lomax found himself a beggar.

It affected him very little. He indulged in a few epigrammatic sentences on the subject of his revenge on society, and took no more trouble. People asked him what he could do? He assured them that he should continue to live a gentleman's life to the last. Others spoke of his wife, of his family—what prospects had they? His reply was characteristic. "The only good day's work I ever did in my life," he said, "was that on which I selected a woman of good family to be the mother of my children. They will find that out now."

They did so.

Captain Lomax was outwitted.

His wife's family settled a yearly sum on the lady, whose position was that of a widow, and on the children. Something more was promised when the latter became of age; but all on one condition, namely, that the respectability of the family should be kept up. In other words, it was a stipulation—that the boy should not go into trade, nor the girls descend to anything in the way of getting an honest living.

This condition had been complied with.

Though it was a struggle, Lady Lomax maintained her position to the very best of her ability. She mixed in good society. Her son was sent to Oxford long enough to warrant him in calling himself an Oxford man, and so acquiring that stamp which only the universities can give a man. The daughters were everywhere welcome, partly on account of their beauty and accomplishments, partly because of their mother's family, and the general belief that they would be well off some day. These causes combined brought them plenty of suitors, and out of the number two have already been named.

The wealthiest of these was Imlac Garmeson, the banker. He had pursued Ada with what, in a younger man, would have been justly described as seduction. From the first she had repulsed him with coldness, and shrunk from him in positive disgust. She had returned his costly presents, and met his pleadings with scornful refusals. This only produced an effect the very opposite to that intended. The more he was repulsed, the more warmly did the banker carry on the siege. However strong his feelings of admiration might have been, they were weak in water compared to the operation of two other qualities which made up more than half his character—these were, obstinacy and vindictiveness. It was his boast that he never yielded to a difficulty or forgave an injury.

In this case he fully acted up to his character.

The other suitor who has been mentioned, Hamnet Tresillian, was of an entirely different class. The Tresillians were a family of good standing, and Hamnet, the only son, was a young man possessed of every advantage which circumstances could confer on him. Handsome, intelligent, and wealthy, he was admired and courted on every hand. At present he was scarcely of age; but up to this time he had regarded no one with the feeling which Ada Lomax had inspired in his heart.

Of this feeling he had not directly spoken a word; but his heart told him that his love was reciprocated by the fair object of it, and he was supremely happy in the prospect thus opened to him.

As yet he was regarded by both families simply as the friend of Arthur Lomax.

Such being the position of affairs, Hamnet was somewhat startled when, two mornings before the day on which our story opens, he had received a little three-cornered note in the handwriting of Ada Lomax. His colour came and went as he recognised the delicate characters, and the very feel of the paper sent a delicious tremor through him.

"Ada Lomax writing to me?" he asked himself, unable for the moment to realize the fact.

Then, with a tremulous hand, he tore open the envelope.

A few words comprised the entire letter. They stated that the writer was in despair, that her brother Arthur had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared, and that she entreated Hamnet, for her distracted mother's sake—he noted that phrase, and wished it had been omitted—to communicate any information he might possess that would serve as a clue to the cause of the young man's absence.

Hamnet had no information beyond this: that Arthur and he had dined together, by invitation, the evening before, at the Junior United Service Club, and had parted in Pall Mall, near midnight—Arthur being then in company with two officers, one named Evering, as he believed, and a foreigner, whom he had formerly met at Baden Baden. The expressed object of the party, from whom Hamnet separated in consequence of an appointment, was that of playing cards at the house of the foreign gentleman.

All this, with the exception of the card-playing item, which he delicately withheld, Hamnet conveyed in a letter to Ada Lomax—the first he had ever written to the fair object of his passionate admiration. He added that he would devote himself from that hour to the discovery of her brother's retreat.

Hamnet Tresillian was as good as his word. Day and night he might be seen rushing from place to place, never still, never giving his servants or his horses a moment's peace. And each night he reported to Ada Lomax the result of his adventures, and received from her an acknowledgment of her gratitude, and an apology for not asking him to call, on account of her lady mother's distress of mind.

It was most annoying—that "distress of mind."

A young, ardent, impassioned lover could hardly be

supposed to sympathize greatly with anything which separated him perpetually from the object of his devotion, and he could scarcely read of that distress of mind with common patience.

"If I could only see the dear girl for a moment," he thought—"if I could only hear her speak one word of thanks, I would go through fire and water to serve her."

But this, though strongly hinted at in the nightly reports, met with no encouragement. Not the slightest.

Among others to whom Hamnet turned his attention, Leonard Havering occupied a foremost place. But, as he was daily expected up from Walmer, he awaited his arrival. Then, hearing that he was in town, he, one morning, went direct to the house in Westbourne Park.

He was in the act of ascending the steps, when the door was opened by a servant in attendance, and a gentleman emerged from the house. Hamnet knew him in an instant. It was Imlac Garmeson, the banker. They had met before, met in Ada's presence, and had instinctively regarded each other as rivals, in spite of the difference in years between them. The younger man had, of course, regarded the other with contempt; but he did not like him any the more. As to the banker, all the worst feelings of his nature were roused at the sight of that handsome face and manly figure. But on this occasion a new emotion, one of vindictive triumph, possessed him.

"Ah, Tresillian!" he said, with assumed frankness.

"Any news of our friend?"

"Of Arthur Lomax?" asked the other. "None."

"You have been busy looking for him, I hear; and no tidings, eh?"

"I've sought for him everywhere."

"Indeed! Your devotion is quite chivalric," said the elder man, with a sneer.

"No; it is the simple act of a friend."

"Simple enough, no doubt; and quite disinterested, eh? Quite disinterested, I say!"

"I hear, sir," returned Hamnet, "and I understand. And since you will have it, I'm not hypocrite enough to deny that I have an ulterior motive."

"That of pleasing Ada Lomax?" cried the other, in a shrill voice.

"And why not?" was the quiet home-thrust.

"Why not, sir?—why not?" reiterated the furious banker. "Why, hasn't Ada herself done enough to open your eyes?"

"To open my eyes?"

"Can't you see that she has thrown you off?"

"On the contrary."

"What?"

He asked the question with a face of horror.

"I say, that, on the contrary, I believe that I never stood higher in her estimation than at this moment. I believe that she appreciates the depth and intensity of my love as she has never done before. Her language to me this very day convinces me that her heart is mine; and though I have an experienced rival in yourself, I have no doubt as to my ultimate triumph."

Imlac Garmeson listened, purple with rage.

"Miserable puppy!" he gasped, clenching at his cane, as if he prepared to lay it across the young man's shoulders. "Her heart yours? She listen to you? This is folly, sir—this is infatuation! But take care. I caution you to beware, both as to what you say and how you act to this girl. I give you the warning now; neglect it, and some day I may have to teach you the consequences of your temerity."

Hamnet Tresillian listened in amazement.

"Do you mean this?" he asked.

"Distinctly."

"And by what right do you address this language to me?"

"By the right of—!" he paused, and added, "the accepted suitor."

Had the cane which the banker grasped so vindictively cut him a blow across the face, the younger rival could not have recoiled more piteously.

CHAPTER VI

FOULTER'S RENTS.

But what is this?

Here is a path to it. 'Tis some savage hold.

Julius Caesar.

Poor soul! If thou hast fall'n into this straight,

Thy mother's tears will flow for thee.

Wild Huntsman.

HAMNET TRESILLIAN did not enter Havering's house.

The words he had just heard left him utterly overcome. He did not even notice the malignant and triumphant glance which lit up Garmeson's cruel eyes, as the man took his abrupt departure. All that he was conscious of was the statement which had just been made to him, and which he could not discredit.

Garmeson was not lying.

He knew that—he was as certain of it as of his own consciousness. Everything in the man's manner confirmed the truth of his words. Never before had he been so jubilant, so exulting; and that touch of jealousy at the thought that the younger man was taking advantage of his doting confidence was unmistakably genuine.

"Never, never will I trust a woman more," was Hamnet's resolution. "If Ada has sold herself to this man, there's an end of affection, constancy, natural feeling—everything!"

A smart slap on the back startled him out of his reverie, and opened his eyes to the fact that he was standing and gesticulating in the public streets.

"Hamnet, my boy!" cried a cheery voice.

He turned, and held out his hand.

"You! Jack?" he exclaimed, "and about already?"

"All right, dear boy—it's clean collar and dinner day."

The individual who gave this singular reason for being abroad at an unusually early hour, was an original.

He was universally known as Jack Thorn, except among the factious, who rang changes on his name, and called him Black Thorn, Crack Thorn, or Quack Thorn—the latter in reference to a tradition that he was the son of a deceased proprietor of a patent medicine. If this was not really his origin, no one knew what was.

He had been about town for years and years, with his handsome, florid, impudent face, his unimpeachable whiskers, which descended in two points, and floated in the wind as he walked, and his well-clad figure, now inclining to corpulence.

Strangers knew Jack Thorn as the man who was always fresh and rosy, always well dressed, and always about town, day and night.

Friends knew him as an eccentric being, who, according to his own account, had no family, no profession, no income, and yet held his own with the best of those who enjoyed all these advantages.

Certainly he affected poverty—said he had his dinner-day, and penny-bun-with-cup-of-water-at-drinking-fountain-day; but if this was so, he threw on it, and people only laughed at it, as he meant they should.

As an idle man, Jack Thorn had volunteered to assist his friend Hamnet in his search for Arthur Lomax, whom he said he "had met."

But then he "had met" everybody who ever lived, according to his own account, for this was one of his peculiarities.

"Well, what success?" asked Hamnet, mastering his feelings as he best could at sight of Thorn's radiant face.

"What success, dear boy? Every success. We've traced him."

"Found him?"

"No, no, not quite. Traced, I said—t-r-a-c-e-d—traced."

"But where did you trace him to?"

"There you are, impetuous as ever, dear boy. I haven't traced him to, I've only traced him from. We know that on the evening of his disappearance he dined with friends we've met, and we've suspected that he went from thence to a house of a distinguished Italian—I've met him—where the play is high, and the denunciation of foreign despots is fervid—absolutely fervid. Now, I have found out that our friend—oh, I've met him, you know—left that house."

"So far, then, he was safe?"

"Well, yes, dear boy—unless one of two things had happened. Either he had played and lost, which is probable; in which case he might have thrown himself into the Thames. Or, he might have played and won—vastly improbable, by the bye—and in that case he was possibly drugged, followed, and carried insensible on board the count's yacht, for the double purpose of robbery and exportation. They want money and men in Italy, you know."

"But this is dangerous work," suggested Hamnet.

"Yes, dear boy; but danger is some people's pleasure. However, as I was saying, he was seen to leave the count's house."

"Drunk or sober?"

"Oh, nobody leaves sober."

"The case is hopeless, then," said the younger man. "Looking for a man drunk four days ago in the streets of London is, indeed, realizing the search for a needle in a bundle of hay."

Thorn did not at once reply, but stopped back a pace or two; and putting his hands upon his hips, stared in his friend's face.

Something in the expression of it, something in the tone of the voice, or in the general manner of the man, had struck him.

"Hallo, dear boy!" he at length ejaculated, screwing his mouth into a whistle. "What's this?"

"What is—what?" Hamnet asked, sharply.

"This change! What does it mean? Yesterday you were red hot on the scent—to-day you're ice."

"Each day renders the task more hopeless," the young fellow remarked, with a sigh.

"Stuff!" returned Thorne, contemptuously. "I'm not to be put off with that. You're changed, dear boy—dead changed. And there's only one thing could have brought that change about—something has happened between you and our fair sister."

Hamnet's face crimsoned.

"And what then?" he demanded.

"Oh, nothing then; only if you didn't mean to go through with the affair, you might have mentioned it. That's all. I wasn't aware, dear boy, it all depended on whether a woman smiled or frowned. But you know best. So say the word, and we'll give it up. Pity, too, just as we were about to find."

"Jack, my dear fellow!" exclaimed Hamnet, "I'm a fool, a weak, capricious fool! But you must forgive me. You were right in guessing that something had happened—it has. From being the happiest I'm suddenly the most miserable of human beings. Pray bear with me, and act just as your judgment and your kind heart prompt you to do."

Jack Thorne grasped the hand extended to him, and squeezed it in his gloved hand.

"What a strange fellow you are, dear boy, to what I am!" he exclaimed, with a laugh. "Come along."

Hamnet yielded, and they went along and still along, ever moving cityward; but through neighbourhoods wholly strange to the young man. It was Thorne's boast that he knew London backwards, and would go from any point to any point in less time than any man living. On this occasion he showed astonishing dexterity in picking his way. Sometimes they crossed the main thoroughfares; but always dived again into fetid courts, up dark and tortuous alleys, through houses, and by such bewildering blind ways, that Hamnet was fairly astounded.

At length they stopped before a low archway, through which it was possible to catch a glimpse of clothes drying, and of low, tumble-down buildings, forming a lane. Over this archway was written, in faint letters, "Poulter's Rents."

"Halt!" cried Thorne.

"Is this our destination?" asked his companion.

"This horrible place?"

"Fact, dear boy," said Thorne. "One of the worst places in town; but we must not mind; our way lies through it. You don't know Poulter? Capital fellow, an officer, and owner of this valuable property. And now to put you up to our reason for coming here. Strange things go on in Poulter's Rents, and two events have come to its worthy owner's ears, which he was good enough to mention to me last night, quite ignorant of the use to which I should apply them. One was that a man named Cooter, an idle, hulking lout, half-sailor, half-landman, who lives in the Rents, was seen speaking to a gentleman at a late hour four nights ago under this archway. The other fact is that next morning the fellow's eldest girl, Madge Cooter, was offering for sale a portrait-locket, mounted in gold, evidently belonging to a person in a good position in life."

"Well?"

"Why, my dear boy, can't you put this and that together? Isn't it part of Arthur Lomax's description, as given by you, that he generally wore a portrait-locket?"

"He did!" cried Hamnet, his eyes brightening with interest as he spoke; "but why did you not mention this clue before?"

"Because it may lead to nothing. But come, we shall meet someone here."

They stopped, so as to save their hats, the archway being so low, and presently emerged into the court, where it was possible to stand upright for a moment, but not possible to go far without further ducking, by reason of the clothes which hung from lines stretched from house to house, apparently with a view to their becoming speckled with blacks. As to their drying in a place without sun or air, that seemed out of the question.

Hardly had they entered this grove of linen, before their ears were assailed by cries and screams, accompanied with piercing exclamations, in which "murder!" greatly predominated. Hamnet was alarmed, but his companion entreated him to be calm.

"You're not used to Poulter's Rents," he said. "The mode of life here is peculiar. In this delightful region, gin constitutes the only known form of nourishment, and blasphemy and the use of the fists are regarded as the elements of a liberal education. By Jove, though!" he added, "here is a little extra excitement. Duck, and we shall behold."

But before they could fight their way far through the lines of wet clothes, which were of a slimy and clinging nature, the sounds drew nearer, and they suddenly found themselves in the midst of a mob of the noisiest and foulest description—a screaming, yelling, imprecating mob, too—from which, under ordinary circumstances, they would have been but too happy to beat a hasty retreat. But, as it was, they

stayed, seeing in a moment that there was no ordinary excitement among the Poulter's Rents.

Three policemen in their midst denoted that something serious was passing. These officers were dragging forward a man who exactly answered the description which Jack Thorne had given of Cooter, the half-sailor. His jacket was off, and they had hold of his blue shirt, which was being torn to ribbons by the violence of his exertions to escape; but to those who had once seen him (as we saw him at the door of Captain Havering's house, on the night of the accident) he was unmistakable.

"What's the row, officer?" asked Thorne, addressing a policeman wearing a stripe on his arm.

"Suspicious case, sir. Stand still, can't ye?" he added, giving his prisoner a vicious kick with his knee. "Gentleman missing, sir; seen in this place with this man, and never seen after."

"That's awkward!" remarked Thorne.

"Worse than that, sir. We get information of suspicious property being offered for sale by this fellow's daughter. We go to the house, and he's saucy to us. His old woman's saucy to us. And, as for his gal, she's the sauciest of the lot."

"Duced suspicious!" cried Thorne, with a grave face, but a merry twinkle in the eye.

"Yes, sir," continued the officer—"we search the place, and find several things that this man never came honestly by. There's a riding-whip, a satin scarf, one white kid-glove, a single spur, a pocket-handkercher, and—"

"The deuce!" interrupted Thorne. "There must have been wholesale robbery, then?"

"Lucky for him if there's been nothing worse," returned the officer.

"Worse?"

The prisoner interposed, making a violent effort to free his arms as he did so.

"Murder he means," said he. "And what right have he to 'spect me? I didn't make the hundred feet well under the bricks of the back yard. 'Twas there afore my time. And what if the Fleet Ditch does run under our kitchen, and we've got a trap into it? I can't help it. Collarin' a cove like this 'ere ain't English—that's what I say. Let 'em prove so'thing agin a cove fust. And what 'ave they got to prove?"

Thus appealed to, the officer who had before spoken, and who appeared to know Thorne, drew from his breast some brightly glittering object.

"He talks of proof, sir," he said, holding this object at arm's length—"how should a man like him come possessed of the things I've named, and this along with 'em?"

Thorne took the proffered trinket. It was a portrait-locket, enamelled, and with a cypher in gold on the back.

Hamnet Tresillian bent forward to look at it.

Directly he caught sight of the cypher, he uttered a cry.

"'Tis his," he said.

"You know it?" asked the officer.

"Perfectly well."

"It belonged to some friend of yours?"

"Yes—to a man who has been four days missing. Those are his initials."

"What, A. L.?"

"Yes—his name was ARTHUR LOMAX. Poor fellow!"

As he spoke, the prisoner gave a violent plunge forward, and dashed at the locket; at the same time he succeeded, for the moment, in freeing himself from his captors.

(To be continued.)

PILGRIMAGES IN INDIA.—An India paper of a late date says:—"Thirty miles north-east of Sholapoor, at Toolazapoor, is the great temple of the Goddess Bhovant, and twice in the year the temple is thronged by men and women of every grade, who come to pay their vows and sacrifice to the idol. Besides this, at every full moon, long trains of pilgrims may be seen flocking thither, and such is the faith of the people in the healing power of the goddess, that the sick are resorting there constantly in the vain hope of some relief. The temple at Punderpoor is still more renowned. Not to speak of the myriads who go there at the great festivals, persons make a pilgrimage thither every month from a distance of 50 to 100 miles, and the practice is kept up for many years. One man, who had apparently come from a distance, the writer saw near Barsee, making the journey by prostrations, measuring his length upon the ground. It was under the burning sun of noonday; and, hardly able to proceed, he seemed the very picture of despair; but a case still more remarkable was that of a man performing the journey by rolling himself upon the ground. We came up with him two miles east of Wairag, and asked him where he was going, and why he was thus torturing himself? He at first did not

seem to hear, but at length stopping, he lay exhausted upon the ground, and answered in a faint voice that he was going to Punderpoor. After some further questions, as the writer remonstrated with him upon the folly of such a course, he raised his head from the ground, and, half-reclining, said that he had come so far already that he could not desert now. He stated that his village was near Chandrapoor, 450 miles to the east from there, that he had spent 15 months on the way thus far, and that it was 40 miles more.

"STOP THE WEDDING;" OR, UNCLE HENRY'S TELEGRAM.

"Stop the wedding—cannot return till to-morrow!" Such was the telegraphic despatch that started the quiet family circle at 14, Graves Place. Quiet family circle, I said—as quiet as it could be, and a wedding on the carpet. For weeks preparations had been going on. The bride's trousseau was one of great splendour, her gifts valuable—she herself was a very queen of beauty—her sisters, some years younger, were in ecstasies at the expectation of being bridesmaids—the wedding was to take place at nine the following morning, in one of the most fashionable churches—the wedding-breakfast was already in course of preparation.

One may imagine the consternation that prevailed on the receipt of this despatch. Myriam, the bride expectant, was not in the drawing-room.

"What in the world can it mean?" cried Aunt Anne, agitated, for she, the very personification of dignity, the beau ideal of propriety, was really shocked. Mrs. Netherell stood with the paper in her hands, her cheeks growing paler every moment, her eyes fastened upon it.

"I never heard of such a ridiculous thing in my life!" said Anne Netherell, a pretty little thing of fifteen. "Why, aunty, it's abominable! Why, how can it be done?—and it's so peremptory—'stop the wedding,' as if it never was to be—not postponed—oh, dear me!"

"I'm sure I can't think—I'm sure I'm very much perplexed!" murmured the mother; and, indeed, her face was a study. She could not seem at once to take in the whole of this overwhelming news, but gazed round her helplessly, as if she saw a thousand threatened dangers, and knew not how to avoid them. Then she sank upon a seat with the plaintive cry:

"What will Myriam say?—what will the poor child do?"

"Sure enough; why, Sue, the thing is preposterous! It never can be bestowed—never! Invitations all out—no time to send them—why, bless me, it would take till to-morrow night to get word to the Thornebys and brother Carlisle's. Is the man crazy?"

"Anne, there must be some very urgent, very terrible reason for this," murmured her sister.

"A whim, I'll lay my life—a whim of Henry's. He was always just so. I've seen all along that it was nearly killing him to have Myriam marry—the foolish, unreasonable man! I'm sure Mr. Barry is a splendid fellow—my beautiful of a gentleman—and I've felt all along that she was a lucky girl to get him. And, Sue, she loves him as she loves her life."

"There's the trouble, Anne; she's so sensitive and delicate, that I fear the most serious consequences. Then they'll all be here to-morrow—what shall we say? what shall we do?" and she wrung her hands helplessly.

"Say—do; why, say you'll not listen to this foolish advice; just let them be married."

"What! when he has forbidden it? Not for worlds on worlds."

"I tell you it will all turn out nothing. Some silly little rumour he's heard—some impossible gossip. You know how credulous he is. Just say nothing about it. Why, Sue, think of the scandal, the ridiculous figure we should cut. I shall just march right straight off, and not let my face be seen here again. We have nearly fifty invitations out. I tell you, Sue, nothing short of death should stop the ceremony now."

"If he had only told what it was!" moaned Mrs. Netherell. "I declare, it will set me in a fever."

"And serve you just right if you pay any attention to it at all. Oh, dear, I wish you were more like me. He should never know I had received the telegram."

"But, Anne, think; if it should be something frightful, and my child's happiness be blasted!"

"In that case, wouldn't it be blasted any way? If Barry proves unworthy, I know just what a blow it will be to Myriam's sensitive temperament. And, as brother will be home to-morrow, all serious consequences may be stopped. Indeed, Sue, I think the poor child would rather have it so. Henry will be home just after they have started, then he can overtake them."

It may seem almost incredible that such counsel

should have been heeded; but the weak, fond mother had all her life been controlled by her stronger-minded sister, even in matters of serious import.

There were those who said that Miss Anne was, as far as capability and action could go, the real managing, working head of the family.

The two younger sisters watched the conversation with a gleam of hope lighting up their clouded faces.

"If we can't wear those lovely muslins after all!" sighed the youngest.

"Oh, we shall; mamma will give way—she always does," was the rejoinder. "It would be frightful to have no wedding after all that has been going on. Oh, dear, I should want to run away and hide myself; and I am sure it would just about kill Myriam. Besides, I don't believe there's anything against Mr. Barry. Why, he's just the kindest fellow alive."

"Anne, I don't know what to do," wailed Mrs. Netherell; "it seems as if I should go crazy."

"You do nothing, then," responded her sister. "I'll judge and jury in this case. I'm only sorry you saw the telegram. If I had received it, you would never have been the wiser, I assure you. Why, fancy you're going to Barry to-night: 'Mr. Barry, I'm very sorry; but my daughter can't be married to-morrow morning.' And he would insist, as he has a right to, on having a reason, and you would have nothing to show but that miserable message. Why, it's ridiculous—it's stupid!"

"Well, well, Anne, I suppose it must go on then; but I shall be wretched every moment of the time for fear it has gone wrong."

"More stupid you, then," retorted her sister. "Now I'm going down to see that the icing is put properly on the cake. How ridiculous for you to look so pale! Don't always come out right? I tell you to dismiss all fear, and leave Myriam and Mr. Barry with me. Put off the wedding, forsooth—I'd like to see it done!"

So the young bridesmaids expectant were jubilant; and after receiving repeated exhortations not to whisper a word of what had passed to Myriam, they hurried up-stairs to inspect their dresses again, and to tease their elder sister.

Meantime there was no cloud on Myriam's sky. She stood shy and beautiful in her own room; thoughtfully quiet—a little smile now and then dimpling lips and cheeks, as she thought of Barry's parting words the evening before. She was tall and queenly, with beautiful brown eyes that had, at times, a tinge of sadness in them, making her beauty only more bewitching. Her health had always been good, yet that she was fragile could be seen in the delicacy of her figure, the blue-veined temples, the quickly vanishing crimson that came and went so suddenly.

George Barry, to whom she was engaged, was a splendid specimen of manhood, well connected, a man of fortune, and had brought the best letters from merchants of long standing in his native town. He was on the eve of forming a business connection with Mr. Netherell, Myriam's uncle, who, fussy, nervous, and opinionated as he was, had yet possessed sufficient business talent to become a leading merchant, and a man of great influence among his fellow townsmen. Barry had met Myriam at a large party, been charmed instantaneously, and the result was that a wedding seemed inevitable. It was on both sides a love-match, and nothing had occurred to break the happy monotony of their courtship. Indeed, if Myriam had not been very deeply in love, she would have longed for some element of discord that the course of true love might not have run so smoothly.

But she was as perfectly happy as it ever fell to the lot of maiden to be. She did not even notice the careworn face of her mother, whose nervous agitation was plainly visible to all the rest of the party. Perhaps the forced gaiety of Aunt Anne, always the life of the household, covered the embarrassment of the rest. Certainly she was never gay or more at her ease.

The bride looked more than interesting; she was regally lovely. All the guests came, the church was crowded, and everybody cried "splendid" under their breath as she came out, leaning on her husband's arm.

"Why, mamma, are you faint?" she asked, anxiously, as while the guests were discussing the bridal-breakfast, her mother entered her room to aid her in preparing for her journey.

Well might she ask. The hollow cheeks were ghastly white, and the eyes glistened unnaturally.

Now that the ceremony was actually over did Mrs. Netherell take into consideration the possible consequences of her rashness. That the bride's uncle, who had always stood to her in the place of a father since her father's death, was absent, did excite some comment, but then everything of that kind was laid to his peculiar habits.

"He worshipped Myriam," said one old maid, cousin to another, "and he couldn't bear to see her married. I shouldn't wonder if he planned to be away just at this time on purpose. They say he will be at home before they start off, however."

Mrs. Netherell sank into a chair at her daughter's exclamation. In truth, she was quite prostrate; for between her anxiety and her fear, she had passed a terrible night. Myriam knelt down, and put one hand tenderly on the faded cheek.

"Dearest mother, I never thought this would shake you so," she said, tenderly. "You have always been so cheerful till to-day."

"I—I tried to be, Myriam!" gasped her mother, "I was—but—but her—the fear—the—oh, if you shouldn't be happy!" and down fell the tears that had been so hardly restrained.

"Happy—why, dearest mother, with such a man as my George, how can I help it? You, yourself, have often said you could find no fault with him. Oh, mother, he is so devoted, so noble! I thank God for such a husband!" she murmured, hiding her blushing, happy face in her mother's bosom.

"Yes, Myriam, dear, I have said so—I cannot but feel so even now, and yet—if—if—Oh! I am clouding my child's morning. Go, Myriam—forget how foolish I have been. Go—I shall recover, soon."

"But, mother, I can't think—I fear you are ill. Certainly you never looked so careworn. And then Uncle Henry has not come to wish me joy, and altogether I feel as if there was just one drop of bitter in my cup. Come, mother, cheer up, or I shall dread to leave you. See, does my travelling-dress fit well?"

"There, everything has gone off splendidly!" cried Aunt Anne, triumphantly. "How much better than to have had hysterics, and exclamations, and sour faces, and an untasted wedding-breakfast!"

"Oh, Anne!" exclaimed her desponding sister, "what a woman you are!"

"Yes. I'm not to be worried into the blues, I can tell you. Henry tried that on in his bachelor days, and I believe he married that poor, desponding little wife of his, who fretted herself dead in a year, out of sheer spite, because I would not believe his predictions. I must confess I was rather astonished to see him take so wonderfully to Barry, poor fellow! I can't help thinking how he would have looked, if things had been as topsy turvy as my brother would have made them!"

"Still, it's an awful risk to run—an awful risk!" said her sister, with pained lips.

"An awful fiddlestick! you're so much like Henry! Well, it's all over, and now I wish he'd come home. Don't tremble that way, you silly, cowardly thing; you shan't bear the blame; I'll take it all on my broad shoulders."

Meantime the subject of their conversation had started the night before in anticipation of reaching his home by twelve o'clock—for he thought of his determined sister, and feared for her influence in the household.

But, lo! and behold, at one of the stations a detention occurred, by the breaking down of an up-train. This was terrible, but there was no help for it, nor could any obliging train come the sooner for his nervousness. So he soothed himself by walking round and round the station, as if he were racing for a wager, muttering to himself about the confounded trains that always failed one when there was any special business on hand. And thus he walked, watching, waiting in an agony of impatience, while within the little room the lamps burned low in their sockets, emitting plenty of smoke and an effluvia most horrible; and tired babies yelled and would not sleep; and men in heavy coats stretched themselves upon settees, leaving their wives to watch the coming of the train for them.

"I shan't get home till morning—I shan't get home till morning!" wailed he, unconsciously adopting the refrain of a drunken song, with a trifling alteration; "Oh, what would I have given if I had only known this thing before. The rascal! the villain! my fingers ache to get hold of him. Confound the train, confound all trains!"

Twelve, one, two, three o'clock sounded, and still no trains in sight—no distant whistle, no rumble of wheels miles away.

All the lights had gone out long ago, and, fortunately, all the children had cried themselves to sleep. Nor was it till half-past three o'clock that the wretched company were escorted in the most uncomfortable of seats, on their way to their longed-for homes.

Of course, the regular conveyance had gone, and there was a detention of an hour more, during which time a cart, almost devoid of springs, and an asthmatic horse were obtained. Under the circumstances, it is no wonder that the worthy man attracted attention by his almost spasmodic efforts to seem quite comfortable—by his repeated ejaculation that he might have walked the distance much faster; by his very gentlemanly abuse of the driver, the horse, and all concerned.

It was not only broad daylight, but nearing eleven o'clock when poor Uncle Henry appeared in the town of—driving along at a break-neck speed towards his own house.

"Here he comes!" said Aunt Anne, defiantly.

"Oh, heavens! what shall I say to him?" cried Mrs. Netherell, in a shaking voice.

"Just hold your tongue, and let me do all the talking," was the response. "I'll find out what's the matter, quick enough. One good thing, Myriam is far enough off by this time."

In came Henry, his face half-purple with the efforts he had made to outride time.

"Pity you didn't get here to the wedding-breakfast," said Anne, quietly.

"What!" he cried, "it ain't come off, has it? Then it's all up. Is it possible you didn't get my despatch?"

"Despatch, pray when did you send one?" innocently inquired Anne.

"Yesterday—good heavens! there's a pretty mess now."

"Henry, what is it?" screamed his sister Sue, almost breathless.

"I must be off—I must take the noon train. Don't talk to me," he added, as some imaginary contingency threatened, "I'll finish him without pistols."

"Oh, Henry! how dreadfully you talk!" cried Mrs. Netherell, hysterically. "What is the trouble? Tell me—Myriam's poor mother!"

"Tell you, madam!" gasped the man, starting towards the door. "I will tell you, madam—and you," bowing stiffly towards Miss Anne. "Your precious Myriam's precious bridegroom has got another wife, that's all!" and he made a dive for the door.

"Another wife!" shrieked Mrs. Netherell, falling back, deadly faint.

"Yes, madam, and three children. The villain, to come here in this barefaced manner, I'll—"

"Oh, Henry, it was me—unhappy me. I did it, Henry—"

but she was roused by an energetic shake. "Don't you see he's gone, you silly thing?" cried her sister; "and lucky for you he is. If he knew you got that telegram, I don't know what he might be tempted to do."

"Oh, Anne, Anne, don't speak to me!" cried her sister. "It was your fault, through my foolish weakness for yielding. Oh, Anne, my poor girl!—ruined! ruined!"

"I don't believe a word of it!" exclaimed Aunt Anne, with energy.

"You don't believe it?"

"Not a bit of it. I wouldn't believe it if I saw the other one with my own eyes."

"Oh, Anne—how foolish you talk! what will my poor child do—my poor, gentle Myriam?"

"She'll do just as I should," said Aunt Anne, stoutly. "She won't believe a word of it, or else she's no niece of mine."

"But Henry is so prudent!" cried the other, wringing her hands; "he never in the world would say such a thing unless he had good grounds for it—never. Annie, I must go and comfort my poor child."

"Hush! the servants will hear!" said Annie, who in her inmost heart did quake a little; "and as to any such wild goose scheme as that, I shan't countenance it. If anybody goes, it's me."

"Oh, but Anne!" cried the other, helplessly, "I am her mother!"

"Yes, and you're nearly if not quite ill, and what would you do if you found her? Strengthen her to bear and contradict it, or go to crying till you quite disheartened her. No, the child wants something beside that; and do you stay till I return. If there is really any trouble, which I don't for a moment believe, I'll bring her back with me. But it's my impression that she won't come and won't believe it. I wouldn't, if I was in her place."

"It didn't seem as if he could be so wicked!" cried the other, still walking about helplessly, and wringing her hands. "Oh! how can I stay quiet here—I might go with you."

"No, no; go up-stairs and try to rest while I get ready. And don't worry, for I tell you everything will come out right."

In their own parlour, Myriam and George sat engrossed with each other. He was giving her an animated description of his travels, she interrupting with delighted exclamations, as here and there a choice bit of word painting revealed his artistic power.

"I am acquainted with one family in particular," he continued, "whose members quite charmed me. They were the most innocent girls! perfectly fresh and unhackneyed, though quite in the world of fashion. I—"

A servant entered with a card on a waiter.

"Mr. Netherell," said George, lifting the card.

"Oh, uncle, George!" cried the pretty bride, clapping her hands, childishly. "How kind of him to come, because he could not be at the wedding! Dear old uncle."

"Show the gentleman up," said Mr. Barry; and in another moment the peculiar tap, tap of a slight pointed cane could be heard along the passage.

"Oh, uncle—George! nothing else was wanted to

make me quite happy. I'm so glad you came. Sit down, won't you? Are you not tired? Why, what—what is the matter? Has anything happened at home?"

"Mr. Netherell, it gives me great pleasure to see you," said the bridegroom, politely, at which the little man turned with a look of insulted dignity, which Mr. Barry could not comprehend.

His lips worked almost convulsively, his throat and veins grew purple, until he relieved himself by hissing out:

"You scoundrel!"

Transfixed, scarcely believing his own senses, stood the young bridegroom, wondering if this man, usually so deferential, had taken leave of his senses.

"Mr. Netherell, did you say, sir—"

"I said you were a scoundrel, George Barry, and I say it again."

Terrible was the look that came in the man's deep eyes as he drew his tall figure up. Myriam stood transfixed, quite uncertain what to do at first; but now the red colour surged over her face, and she cried, gravely:

"Uncle Henry, you must not say that of my husband, and before me. Why, uncle, this is not you, this is—"

"Yes, it is me, and I know what I am saying; I know perfectly well what I am about. Myriam, my poor, poor little pet, I—" his lips quivered—"yes, I repeat it," he added, furiously, turning to Barry, "you are a heartless, bad man."

"I cannot allow this language!" thundered George Barry; "I will not from any man, were he thrice my wife's uncle. No, sir, you must not repeat those words to me, or by heavens, I'll make you repent!"

"George! George!" cried Myriam, aghast, now pale with terror.

The door was opened, and another said brought in, but scarcely before Aunt Anne, who had followed the servant, had presented herself.

"Just in time to prevent mischief!" she muttered, as Myriam, frightened, trembling from head to foot, flung herself in her arms. "My poor lamb, just stand up for your rights; don't let them make you believe what they please."

"Oh, aunt, what does it all mean?" cried Myriam, bewildered.

"It means," thundered Uncle Henry, his face almost purple with indignation, "that that man has already a wife and three children."

Myriam seemed suddenly transformed into a statue of white horror.

"It means," continued the excited man, "that I sent a telegraphic message to your mother that the wedding was to be stopped, which never reached her, or else there would have been less trouble. Now, you must go home with me."

There was a dangerous gleam in George Barry's eyes as he stepped forward suddenly, but Myriam hung upon his arm.

"Don't harm him, dear!" she cried; "he is under a delusion; perhaps my poor uncle has lost his senses. You know I don't believe one word of it; no, not if an angel came down and told me."

"I know you wouldn't!" cried Aunt Anne, as the man's step was arrested by the soft touch of his wife's hand. "It's some trumpery story got up to frighten him. I told Sue so yesterday, when—" she met her brother's eye.

"So you did get the message?" he cried, wrathfully, "and it's through you the mischief has all come. I might have known as much. But, sir," and he turned to George, who was quite pale now, but resolute and unflinching, "I believe the story, because I have seen the woman—a poor, pretty, broken-hearted thing she was."

Myriam started in her husband's arms, but he held her close.

"You have seen the woman!" he cried, with suppressed passion; "man, what do you mean?"

"You spent a year in Bristol!" cried the excited uncle.

Again Myriam started; again her husband held her closer to his side.

"Yes, a pleasant year in Bristol."

"And there you married and left your wife and children."

"I am utterly at loss to comprehend you, sir," said George, with dignity.

"I dare say. None so hard to believe as those who have made up their minds not to do so. At all events, I have made up my mind to take my niece home to her mother."

"For shame, Henry Netherell!" cried Aunt Anne, seeing how white Myriam had grown. "You might, at least, have had the grace to have spared the child this public accusation. Mr. Barry, let me take her."

But no, with her falling strength Myriam clung to her husband, and he led her tenderly to a couch, and laid her gently down, stroking her hair back with soft, caressing motion.

Uncle Henry did look rather ashamed of himself; but then, when a man has made up his mind to do his duty, he is generally fortified against the unpleasant, ludicrous, or even the dangerous issues that may spring therefrom.

"This matter seems to me like the veriest farce," said George Barry, when he had composed her sufficiently. "I confess I cannot understand what you are driving at. Some one has practised upon your credulity; I have always held you in too high esteem to believe you would willingly insult me. Suppose you tell me coolly, between ourselves, just how you imagine matters to stand. I will promise, although the subject and your manner are both extremely irritating, to listen to you calmly, and will endeavour to disabuse your mind of any unwarranted prejudice it may have conceived. I listen, sir."

"I have nothing more to tell you, Mr. Barry, than what I have already said. You came among us, one year ago, a stranger, well recommended; and I immediately gave you my confidence, and took you home to my family. Instead of requiting me as a gentleman should, you wormed yourself into the affections of my niece, whom I love as the apple of my eye; and although you knew you were a married man, supposed that the evidences of your crime would be forever hidden. Perhaps you contemplated flight. I didn't know," he added, spitefully.

"Mr. Netherell, I swear to you that, as I hope for salvation, I am not guilty of what you accuse me. I can bring you proof from my friends in Bristol, only give me time, what sort of a man I was there. I cannot imagine what has given you this false and absolutely ridiculous impression. You niece was the first woman I ever loved, certainly the first I have ever married."

"Well, sir," said Uncle Henry, doggedly, "I'm not to believe my own eyes and ears, then; I'm to put aside entirely, the evidence of my senses. I tell you I saw the woman, and I saw your marriage certificate. More than that, the woman is now in this city, and I can produce her."

A faint cry from Myriam made her husband turn in alarm.

"You are doing her a great injury, sir," her husband said, excitedly; "at least, false as this whole thing is, you might have spared her. Come, sir, let there be no delay; put me in communication with this person immediately. I am impatient and indignant at the whole matter. It is no trifling thing to have one's happiness thus rudely broken in upon at such a time."

"You shall see her, for I have made all my arrangements. At the door there is a carriage. It is waiting for you."

"George, take me, too!" cried Myriam, excitedly, springing from the lounge.

"That is impossible, my child," said her uncle, gravely, "for there is an officer inside; and you, sir, had better make no trouble; because, either now, or very shortly, you will be arrested for bigamy."

"Oh, George! George!" cried Myriam, springing to his arms and encircling his neck, "they shall never, never take you. No, Uncle Henry, inhuman monster as you seem!" she cried, her eyes flashing as she turned to him, a crimson spot burning deep in either cheek, "you cannot take him unless you tear me from him. I will not believe it of him—no never, never, never!"

George Barry struggled for composure for his wife's sake, while Aunt Anne, with flashing eyes, strode up and down before him with withering words of contempt.

"There was no need of a police officer," at length George said; "you would not disgrace this poor child by having her husband sent off to prison on the day of her wedding. She, at least, should be spared all unnecessary humiliation, even if it were so. I am astonished that, loving her as you profess to do, you can have so little care for her honour. For heaven's sake, go get the woman; bring her here; I can easily convince you that the whole thing is a delusion. While you are gone, keep your officer within sight; I shall not attempt to leave. Not that I care for the matter at all; I should be soon and triumphantly acquitted, but I have some mercy on this darling; God bless her for her angel's faith in me;" and he kissed her white forehead tenderly, and drove back the tears that were crowding to his eyes.

The old uncle considered a moment, casting jealous glances towards his niece, almost angry that she preferred a stranger, and one, as he supposed, with a tainted name, to him.

"Do as he tells you, Henry; I declare you've acted more like a fool than I thought was in you!" cried Aunt Anne, her shrill voice trebly indignant as she still continued marching up and down before him. "Go off and get the woman, who, I suppose, is crazy or silly—go, bring her here. Listen to a little common sense, for once in your life."

"I can bring her," said Uncle Henry.

"Then why don't you? I'll stand guard, and lock the door, if you say so, till you come back. You needn't be afraid that George Barry will run away; though I should want to, if I were in his place, from you. But go, go—time is passing, and the man wants to clear himself."

Slowly and reluctantly the old man, who was as tenacious and tedious as a snail in all matters of duty (though I am not sure but he covered the last notch in his yard-stick so as to gain an inch when he was measuring cloth for his neighbours), marched away from the premises.

"Don't you worry a bit, darling, there'll be no trouble at all," said Anne, as her favourite sobbed on her shoulder. "It's all a black, wicked lie, as I told your mother. There's no villain written in that man's face, dear; so love and trust him still, for I am willing to risk my life that he is worthy of it."

George Barry gave her a glance of deep, admiring gratitude.

"I am as much in the dark as either of you possibly can be," he said, gravely. "In Bristol I was chiefly with a family of Wrenthams, who know all about my course there, who are acquainted with my acquaintances, and who, I flatter myself, would be quite angry to hear such an imputation cast on the honour of their friend. However, we shall soon find what it means, as probably our good uncle has the creature not far distant."

As he had said, Uncle Henry had taken care to provide the woman with lodgings not far from the hotel.

She had travelled all the way with him, and by her pretty face and quiet, sorrowful demeanour, had only fired his heart more vindictively against the unfortunate Barry. He accordingly drove round to the place, and leaving the officer in the carriage at the door, entered the house and asked for Mrs. Barry, as the woman had called herself. Presently she came in, not as the modest, pretty, self-possessed little woman she had ever seemed, but, closing the door, and dexterously turning the key and taking it from the lock.

Confused, aghast, he sprang to his feet with a short, sharp cry of "madam!"

"Oh, never mind that other affair," she said, dancing hither and thither with a comical look; "I assure you, upon my honour, it was all a hoax, and the only way to keep you with me, for you must know I am the Duchess of Queensbury, and my late lord the duke left me a fortune of a hundred thousand pounds. Now all along it has been you I loved, and I don't mind confessing that the marriage certificate was one I found, and his mother's; so you see I just cunningly erased the date, and put in another. All is fair in war or love, they say."

"But—the children?" gasped poor Uncle Henry, who was too confused and nervous to comprehend yet.

"Oh, the children? that was another little harmless fib, or I couldn't carry out my plan, which was to marry you;" and she attempted to embrace him, but he recoiled with horror. At this, her eyes grew wider, her manner more excitable. She caught from amidst the folds of her dress a small dagger, and flourished it murderously about her head. Uncle Henry sprang to the door, but it was locked. He was there no sooner than she, still threatening with the bit of gleaming steel.

"What do you want?" he cried.

"I want you to marry me."

"Put away that knife, then;" the poor little man was a coward.

"Will you marry me if I do?"

"Yes, I have a carriage at the door."

"Good! I'll go and get ready, only pray excuse the diamonds, for I left them at home;" and away she sailed up-stairs, appearing presently in a gorgeous white shawl and bonnet.

Mr. Netherell assisted her politely into the carriage, where she was resolutely bandaged and pinioned, and driven to the asylum for lunatics.

It was near night when Mr. Netherell appeared before the forlorn trio in the hotel parlour. His haggard, contrite look and dejected manner proclaimed that all was right.

"Forgive me, my boy!" he said, as he held out a hand to George Barry; "the creature was as crazy as a loon. Confound it, that I've been travelling these three days with a mad woman!"

Myriam was happy; her cries of delight were almost hysterical; and Aunt Anne exclaimed, as was her way after such misunderstandings:

"Didn't I tell you there was nothing in it, and he would come out all right?"

It was ascertained not long after that the woman was the daughter of a servant, a laundress in the Wrentham family, in Bristol, and that she had probably found the certificate; which George Barry, who was an orphan, had deposited for safe keeping while he was visiting there. The girl had gone demented.

though he knew nothing of it, and been placed in confinement. Subsequently she had escaped, robbed her father of all her savings, and travelled to London, where Uncle Henry first heard her story, which led to the result we have seen.

Mrs. Netherell, after a day of the most wearing anxiety, was cheered at its close by Aunt Anne's remark, "the whole matter; and though she declared she would have a fit of sickness after it, she never did."

M. A. D.

MEZAR THE MISER.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Behold the banded bow, nor let the cord
Here force to urge the shaft which thou hast fixed,
With barbarous intent, to pierce the heart.
Oh, weigh the threatened deed!—be merciful!

Dante.

ORPHA waited long and patiently for the rescue she felt sure her note would bring; waited until after sunset, and then Michael Freal made his appearance with the messenger.

In answer to her eager inquiries, he unblushingly declared that he had taken her note, and she believed it true.

When the night passed and the morning dawned upon another day of captivity, doubts began to assail her mind.

With the remaining contents of her purse, she tried him to convey another note, addressed this time to Willis Linton. In taking it from her hand he continued to stumble, accidentally or purposely, it was hard to say which, against the table, and upset the inkstand, and every drop of ink was spilled.

"There! you won't be able to write any more letters out of that," he exclaimed, with comic dismay, as he contemplated the damage he had done.

He departed with the note, not appearing again until the next meal.

He did not bring any answer, and told the same story as before; and still Orpha believed him, for she had noticed the low cunning by which he had contrived to make himself master of her little purse.

But when the third day came, and she was still a prisoner, hearing neither from Mr. Goldschmidt nor Willis Linton, she began to understand how she had been duped.

Mr. Goldschmidt might have been prejudiced against her, for she remembered Calvin Stylipian's presence at his household, and could not associate that fact with her captivity; but Willis Linton was truly her friend—she blushed even to herself as she reflected how much that word covered—and would not desert her under any circumstances.

Five days she had wearied out in this lone chamber, when a step ascending the stairs attracted her attention. She had grown familiar with the shambling tread of her uncouth jailor, and could tell its sound in a moment. This was a different step. What was coming? Perhaps deliverance! Her heart bounded at the thought. She sprang eagerly towards the door as it opened, but a single glance made her shrink back at the bitter disappointment. It was Thurston Follansbee who entered the room.

He looked quite juvenile again. He had entirely recovered from his watery accident, and had furnished himself with a new wig and whiskers, which were more curly, more glossy, and more perfumed than those he had lost. He advanced towards Orpha with a smirk upon his features, and with great cordiality. "How is my little bird to-day?" he asked, gaily; "and how does she like her cage?"

"So little that she would like to quit it as soon as possible," retorted Orpha.

"And what would the little bird give for her freedom?" he continued, in the same strain.

"You seek the certificate of deposit, do you not?" asked Orpha, quickly.

"Indeed, we do not; but it is seeking us, and I already suspect that old Mezard will have to pay it one of these days. That was a cunning move of yours to place it in a lawyer's hands, especially one who seems so interested in your affairs as Mr. Willis Linton. Had you have done that years ago, you would now be in possession of the money. I often wondered that you did not. Old Mezard said you were too young and innocent to think of it, and so it proved. But we tried hard to get possession of the certificate, for all that. We knew we missed it in the robbery, but we did think we destroyed it when we burned the millinery shop. It seems we were mistaken, for now, after five years' respite, 'chaos has come again.' But I don't think Willis Linton will trouble us much for the present. We have sent him off on a distant journey on a forged telegram (telling him that his father lay at the point of death), and he will not discover the fraud until he arrives there. Then he can possibly return, Wilner Cars-

ten will be married to Samuella Goldschmidt, and we can afford to pay the certificate out of her dowry."

Orpha had listened to this cool disclosure of villany with indignation and dismay.

"You forget me!" she cried, impetuously. "You forget that I am Wilner Carsten's wife; and a second marriage with Samuella Goldschmidt will be unlawful."

"Oh, no!" returned Thurston, with a peculiar smile. "We have not forgotten you at all. We intend to take very good care of you. Your destiny is all chalked out. You have been tried, and your doom pronounced."

"My doom pronounced! What do you mean?"

"My good little girl, don't you realize your present position? It has been your evil fortune to become a stumbling-block in the path of bold, unscrupulous, and desperate men. You were dangerous to their schemes, and as such, they removed you. Here you are completely in their power. Here your breath could be quickly stopped for ever, and who would be the wiser? Your husband and old Mezard were eager for your death; I interposed, and you still live."

"And what was your object in preserving my life, if indeed you have done so?" asked Orpha, the blood slowly concealing around her heart. She was beginning to realize her danger.

"Cannot you guess? I love you!"

"Love me? You?"

"Yes, is it so wonderful? I am not so old but that the blood courses wildly through my veins yet, and I can appreciate a pretty little woman like yourself."

He advanced towards her, but she drew her petite figure up until she seemed six inches taller, her head erect, and the black eyes gleamed with a scintillating fire.

"Stand back, sir," she hissed through her set teeth. "You had best."

He evidently thought so, for he refrained from his amatory advances, stepped back a little, and regarded her curiously.

"How very like her mother!" he exclaimed, unconsciously uttering his thoughts.

"My mother!" echoed Orpha, with great interest. "Did you know my mother?"

"That I did, pretty one," answered Thurston, carelessly. "She loved me, and, by Jove, I loved her truly, fervently, with the first passion of my life. I have never ceased to regret her. Your face rekindles all that passion, for in your face her image is reflected. You are her very counterpart—so like her that my love returns, filling my heart with all the enthusiasm of youth. You must be mine, Orpha. It is your only hope to escape the death pronounced against you."

Orpha had grown quite pale, her features rigid, her fingers playing convulsively with the handle of a large pair of scissors, which she had been using on the day of her departure from the house of Mr. Goldschmidt, and had absently thrust into her pocket.

"You hesitate?" pursued Thurston, studying the strange look on her face, but unable to decipher it. "Understand me, it is no idle love I proffer. I would marry you, for Wilner is dead now, you know, and merged into Percy, so you see no divorce would be necessary."

Orpha gasped, and the blood came slowly back to her cheeks, increasing in volume until it covered cheek and brow with a crimson glow.

"It is true, then?" she asked, dreamily. "My mother did desert her husband?"

He did not exactly like the tone in which this was spoken—it grated on his ear, something like the rattle of the snake, betokening danger. But his passion hurried him along, and he felt sure of triumph. A weak little woman, all alone with him in that deserted house—how could she escape him?

"Come, what is your answer?" he asked, approaching her with outstretched arms.

"This," cried Orpha, "this—for my mother and myself!" And grasping the scissors, as if they were a dagger, she struck Thurston a savage blow upon the breast.

Fortunately for him it was that she had no better weapon, for the scissors being shut presented quite a blunt point; but as it was, had they not struck upon a button of his coat—which was a frock buttoned up—and glanced off, the blow might have been enough to have finished Thurston's earthly career, for it was dealt with a right good will.

As it was, the coat was gashed with an "envious rent," and Thurston felt the point of the scissors scratch against his ribs in a very unpleasant manner, whilst the force of the blow sent him staggering against the door.

Putting out his hand to save himself from falling, it came in contact with the handle. He quickly turned the latch, and, without waiting to see if Orpha intended to repeat the blow, beat a hasty retreat, putting the door between himself and the infuriated girl as quickly as possible.

He turned the key in the lock, and then drew a long breath of security.

"Phew!" he soliloquized. "That was a narrow escape. Where the deuce did she get a dagger? By Jove! Orpha the second beats Orpha the first all hollow. Spoilt my coat; yes, and gone through waistcoat and all! Ah! it's sore, too, and I can feel the blood trickling; it can't be much, though. Skin rubbed off, I think. It will take some time and trouble to tame her!"

With these reflections, he went down-stairs to examine into the nature of his wound.

Orpha could but smile, notwithstanding her indignation, as she witnessed the precipitate retreat of Thurston Follansbee.

She felt little compunction for the attempt she had made upon his life, nor was she sorry that it had failed.

It was a bold stroke for vengeance and freedom in one effort.

Her only regret was that she still remained a prisoner, helpless, powerless to save herself or Samuella from the threatening danger.

But one thought above all others pressed upon her mind—the undoubted evidence she had received of her mother's guilt.

As unwilling as the child always is to believe in the parent's transgression, she could but credit the story, that Thurston Follansbee had unconsciously let fall, and believe that he had unwittingly spoken the truth.

Unhappy mother! little did you think, when you swerved from the narrow path of duty into the broad way of error, what a thorny path you were laying out for your hapless child.

It was not a time for despondency. She must banish all thoughts but one—the thought of escape.

She had read of malefactors who had escaped from massive dungeons, hemmed in by stone walls and links of iron. They had picked locks with crooked, rusty nails, and dug a way through solid masonry.

Why could she not imitate their example. She was merely confined in a simple chamber, and escape might be easy. At all events it was worth the trial. She would try.

Her first essay was to attempt to force the lock from the door of her chamber, using the scissors as a screw-driver; but she discovered, upon examination, that the lock was placed within the woodwork in such a manner as to render an attempt upon it, with the only tool she possessed, an impossibility.

Disappointed, but not discouraged, she turned her attention next to the window-shutters. They were securely fastened; but if she succeeded in forcing them, whither did the window lead? She could easily ascertain; by placing the table beneath the window, and a chair upon the table, she could look through the oval hole cut in the top of the shutters for the purpose of admitting light.

She did so, and ascending to the elevation she had formed, pulled down the window at the top, and applied her eye to the aperture. She could look down into a dirty yard, paved with brick, and containing a hydrant, which, from constant dripping, appeared to keep the yard in a moist and disagreeably damp condition.

Orpha observed, from her point of view, that the chamber in which she was confined was apparently an adjunct of the house, and the yard she was looking down upon was not attached to the house she was in, but belonged to one adjoining. As near as she could calculate, the window at which she was standing was about eighteen feet from the ground.

Whilst she was looking, a man entered the yard from the adjoining house. He was an old man, with long, white hair, dressed as a labourer. He seated himself upon an old inverted tub in the yard, and commenced filling a little black pipe with tobacco; then he drew several matches upon the damp pavement before he succeeded in getting a light. But, finally, his pipe was lighted, and he commenced to smoke. All this was done very slowly and deliberately, the man all the time keeping up a rambling flow of words, as if he was talking with some one.

Orpha watched him curiously, and was much struck with the singularity of his appearance and actions. His hair was very long and white, but his face was smooth and unwrinkled, quite a pleasant face withal, and his eyes were bright, though they had a kind of wandering expression.

But his actions were the strangest of all. He would take his pipe out of his mouth with his left hand, blow out a dense cloud of smoke, and as the feathery vapor circled upward, he would shake his clenched fist at it, and utter the fiercest denunciations and imprecations.

More than once Orpha thought she detected the name of Lathrop Moneyment amongst his words, but they came to her so indistinctly at her elevated position that she could not be certain.

She called to the man repeatedly, but he did not seem to heed her. He went on with his muttering and

gesticulation, and paid no attention to her cries. She shouted to him until she became hoarse, without attracting his attention, and then she bethought herself of a plan to attract his notice.

He was an old man, and possibly deaf. It was useless to call to him any longer. She had her mother's locket hanging to her neck; she had worn it there ever since it came so strangely into her possession; she would cast it at the feet of the old man, tell him to carry it to the office of Willis Linton (you see her great dependence was on him in this emergency), tell how he came by it, and where she was to be found.

Her name being engraved upon it (though it was meant for the first Orpha, not second) would be his credentials, and bring her speedy aid.

She did not hesitate in this resolve, much as it grieved her to part even for a short time from her mother's picture, but unwound the ribbon from her neck, and cast the locket at the feet of the old man.

It worked to a charm. The old man paused in his mutterings and gesticulations, looked at the locket, and then looked up to see where it had come from. She thrust her arm through the aperture of the window-shutter, and waved her hand to him. She could read upon his features a look that told her she was seen; but he seemed strangely bewildered, and gazed upward with a vacant, unmeaning expression. Then, suddenly seeming to remember, he stooped down and picked up the locket.

Orpha, who had watched all his actions eagerly, considered herself saved. But now the strangest part of the whole scene was enacted. The man examined the locket eagerly—opened it, gave one glance at the face within, and then his pipe fell unheeded, broken into a dozen pieces, upon the pavement; a yell, like that which issues from the throat of an infuriated wild beast, burst from his lips, and he rushed madly into his house.

Orpha remained an hour at her post, but the man did not return to the yard. Much surprised and dispirited by this singular occurrence, she descended from her elevation to the floor.

Another hope gone! She felt like the drowning wretch amongst the billows who sees the passing ship, without the power to make his situation known, and dies in sight of succour.

But she would not yet despair, so she went to work resolutely, with her scissors, on the hinges of the window-shutters.

Orpha was not the only one who heard the cry that issued from the lips of the old man in the yard.

Mother Cyp heard it also, and instantly ran into Davy's room. As she had expected she found him lying upon his bed, writhing in strong convulsions and raving fearfully.

Clutched in his right hand was a ribbon, to which a gold locket was attached, dangling with his every motion. Curious to know where he could have obtained this trinket, and what it was, she grasped his hand and endeavoured to take the locket from him; but his clenched fingers defied her every effort to release the ribbon.

It was like the grip of death. So she contented herself with examining it as he held it.

She recognized it at once. Her limbs tottered beneath her, and she sank upon her knees beside his couch, the hot, blinding tears gushing to her eyes.

"Merciful Father!" she exclaimed, completely overcome by her emotion. "It is mine—the one he presented to me upon my eighteenth birthday—the first after our marriage—the one I gave to Lathrop Momey in the first flush of our infatuation! Where could he have obtained it?"

In vain she watched by Davy, waited until the paroxysm had passed away, and he had become quite calm again, and questioned him in regard to the locket. She could not elicit anything but incoherent phrases, which gave her no information. He either could not, or he would not, tell.

"Eternal Judge!" she said, solemnly, "I see thy hand in this. The end draws near—the years of atonement are nearly expired, and the day of expiation at hand. The bolt so long delayed will be launched forth at last, to smite the transgressors! Let it descend—I await the judgment!"

With these words she returned to her shop.

CHAPTER XIX.

O Death! since I find none with whom to mourn,
Nor whom companion of me moves to sigh,
Wherever I may be, or whither turn;
And since it is by thee that I am stripped
Of all my injuries and all my woes,
And thou resolv'st for me all Fortune's ills,
Since in thy hand, oh, Death! my life is now,
And at thy pleasure is made rich or poor,
To thee, as is most meet, I turn my face.

Dante.

Then Thurston Follansbee descended from the

chamber after his inglorious retreat before Orpha's scissors, which his cowardly eyes had magnified into a dagger, he went into the unfurnished parlour, where old Mezlar was awaiting him.

He quickly stripped off his coat and waistcoat to examine his wound, briefly recounting, with many an imprecation, what had transpired to old Mezlar as he did so.

"There'll be no peace for us while that girl lives," sighed the old reprobate. "Stab a man with a dagger—what depravity! It's a mercy you weren't killed."

Thurston soon discovered that he was more frightened than hurt. The wound was a mere scratch. The skin had been started, and it was bleeding a little. A piece of court-plaster (old Mezlar always carried some in his pocket) soon remedied that, and Thurston put on his coat and waistcoat again.

"What do you intend to do now?" asked old Mezlar.

"Make things sure," replied Thurston, with a significant look.

"How?" demanded Mezlar, sinking his voice to a cautious whisper.

"Is this house insured?"

"Yes; for more than its actual value. Why do you ask?"

"Perhaps you wouldn't be sorry to get the insurance, eh? It's nothing but an old rat-trap as it stands, and bad property. The wedding is fixed a week from to-morrow, and we must have a clear path, with no obstacles, you understand. I did intend to reserve the girl for myself; but after what has happened to-day, I think it best to change my views. The fiend seems to possess that girl, and I verily believe she would cut my throat the first opportunity."

"That's true," affirmed Mezlar, shaking his head, sagely. "A dangerous girl, tricky and deceitful! She robbed me, a poor old man—actually robbed me twice! Got Willis Linton out of my clutches by a cunning device, and now I shall have to pay that certificate after all—but it's to be counted in, you know, with the expenses—but it's so much out of my pocket, any way. Ugh! I could strangle her!"

"Bottle up your indignation," responded Thurston. "I have a plan to rid us of both her and him."

"Is he here?" asked Mezlar, eagerly.

"Yes; safe in the cellar—tied to the coal-bin. This old house is as dry as tinder. Suppose we make a bonfire of it? You get your insurance, and they will never trouble us any more. Wilner marries Samuella—comes into the possession of his father's entire property. We realize our share, and are wealthy for the remainder of our lives."

"It's prison with hard labour, if we are detected," hesitated old Mezlar. "I wouldn't like that, you know."

"Pshaw! there is not the slightest risk. How can we be detected? Freal, for his own sake, will keep quiet, and who can prove that either of us have been near the house?"

"But won't there be a suspicion of something wrong when their bones are found among the ashes?"

"No fear of that. I'll make the fire so effectual that no traces shall be left. There is a lot of old rubbish in the kitchen, which is just the thing for the purpose. A single match applied to the pile will be sufficient. In half an hour the whole house will be in flames. They are both secured, and will be suffocated by the smoke without the possibility of escape. It is near sunset. Mike will bring in their suppers in a short time. We will wait until he comes. He goes to the cellar first, and while he is up-stairs attending to the girl, I will slip down and start the fire. We will leave the house together. It will be quite dark by the time the fire gets well under way. How do you like the idea?"

"I think it will work."

"Have you got your pipe with you?"

"Yes. Why?"

"Let's have a smoke while we are waiting for Mike Freal."

With these words, Thurston Follansbee coolly lighted a cigar. Mezlar followed suit with his pipe. And thus was their scheme deliberately agreed upon.

Michael Freal soon arrived with the fare provided for the prisoners. The portion allotted to the unhappy inmate was very light. Mike's instructions were to give him just enough to keep body and soul together.

Thurston's first idea had been to suffer the unhappy man to starve to death, but a thought that he might be of use to him in some unforeseen emergency had given him a short respite. The emergency had not arisen, and now he was doomed to die.

Thurston and Mezlar left the house with Michael Freal, allowing him to lock the door and retain the key.

They walked along with him to his humble domicile, and, receiving an invitation from him, walked in and sat down.

This just answered Thurston's purpose; he wanted to be near at hand to see the upshot of the affair. Mike lighted a tallow candle, as it was now twilight, and bustled about to get out the whiskey and glasses.

His family were absent. Mrs. Freal had not returned from her day's washing, and Norah was in Mother Cyp's.

Davy was quite beside himself, and required constant care, so the services of Norah had been called into requisition to attend the shop.

They chatted for about half an hour over their whiskey, which was really excellent, when they were startled by an alarm of fire.

"Ha!" exclaimed Mike, "I should say that was close at hand, by the noise they are making."

He sprang to his feet and ran to the door, closely followed by Thurston and old Mezlar. When they gained the street they found that it was close at hand indeed. The old house was in flames.

"Only to see that!" exclaimed Mike, in dismay. "Sure the girl will burn to death, and I've the key in my pocket!"

"Silence!" cried Thurston, clapping his hand over the fellow's mouth. "It's a criminal offence if it is found out! Go into the house and keep shady!"

Michael Freal slunk back into his domicile like a whipped cur.

Thurston and old Mezlar mingled with the throng, which had collected, as is usual in such cases, to watch the progress of the flames—to gape and surmise, block up the way, offering no assistance themselves and impeding the efforts of others.

Suddenly a cry arose from the crowd:

"There's a woman in the house! There's a woman in the house! See—see!" A cry of mingled horror and surprise. Eager fingers pointed her out, and every eye was strained in that direction.

It was so, sure enough. There, at the second story window, a woman's pale face appeared amidst the sheeted flames.

"It is Orpha!" exclaimed Thurston, in old Mezlar's ear. "In the name of wonder, how could she have broken from her chamber?"

Cries for a ladder rang out on every side, but no ladder could be found. The greatest confusion prevailed, and the crowd was in a state of the wildest excitement. No engine had as yet arrived upon the ground. Men shouted for the key of the door; and, when they found it was not forthcoming, they threw themselves against the door and tried to force it; but the lock was strong and made a stout resistance. All this time the woman's peril was increasing—the flames gathering round her like a fiery shroud, shooting out little jets of fire that looked like serpents' tongues.

At last, by an united effort of their strength, the men burst the door from its hinges, and it went crashing in. The flames burst through the opening and greedily began to devour the shattered door. Nothing had been gained by this operation. There was now a wall of fire in the place of the wooden barrier they had beaten down. The men were driven back by its hot breath. No one could enter at that flaming portal and live.

A groan went up from the assembled multitude—the poor woman's requiem.

"Ten pounds for a ladder!" cried a benevolent individual, greatly excited. Vain reward, there was no ladder to be had. Had there been, there would have been no necessity of offering a reward for its production. There were a dozen brave hearts in that crowd who were ready to face death to save that poor woman. But it would have been madness itself to attempt to enter the house. It would have been sure destruction without one hope of saving her.

"Jump down, and we will catch you in our arms!" cried a tall, stout fellow, placing himself as near the window as the heat and flames would permit.

It was her only hope for life—a desperate one; but death was all around her, and she must make a speedy choice. She did so. A moment did she pause, as if offering up a prayer to heaven; and then, springing upon the window sill, to avoid the flames that were rising from the window beneath, sprang boldly out. Either her foot slipped, or the flames and smoke made her giddy, for she descended head first, gliding through the outstretched arms that were raised to catch her, and fell, striking her face heavily upon the pavement.

They caught her up, and bore her tenderly and carefully beyond the heat and smoke, and laid her upon a cellar door, her poor, bruised face looking up to the stars.

She was so disfigured by her fall that scarcely a feature was recognizable.

The long brown hair floated wildly over her mangled features and round her fair, white neck, on which was a ribbon, probably attached to some trinket. Her dress was charred almost to a cinder, and her arms and hands were fearfully burned.

Strangely enough, she had kept her face from the fire, only to have it bruised into an indistinguishable mass of humanity by her fall.

"Is she dead?" cried old Mezard, with simulated grief and emotion, as he pressed through the crowd that surrounded the rescued woman. "My poor, poor niece! is she dead?"

He had been prompted to this course of action by Thurston. That quick-witted gentleman was ever on the alert. Dead or alive, Orpha must not escape them.

"Your niece, old gentleman?" asked a bystander, making his way for the old man respectfully, with a commiserating glance.

"Yes, I am positive it is she," replied Mezard, snivelling, and trying to wipe his eyes with a very dirty handkerchief. "I know the hair—so beautifully brown and glossy—but her features—poor dear, how they are bruised! There is the locket I gave her on her birthday, around her neck. See if it is not engraved with the name of 'Orpha Angevine?'"

The man who had so commiserated old Mezard's simulated affliction drew the locket from the breast of the woman's dress and examined it. The crowd gathered eagerly around him as he did so.

"Poor old man!" he said, with real sorrow; "she is your niece, sure enough. The locket is engraved with the name you mentioned, Orpha Angevine."

"Is—she dead?" asked Mezard, quite overcome. Thurston Pöfanassee laid his hand over the woman's heart—it was still and pulseless.

"Yes," he answered. "She is dead—quite dead!" Mezard sobbed aloud. It was quite pitiable to behold his grief.

"Would any one like to earn a pound by taking the body to the house of Michael Freal?" asked Thurston. "He knows this old man, and will take care of it until it can be buried."

"Sure, I'll do it for nothing!" answered a good-hearted Irishman in the crowd. And taking up the poor mangled remains, he bore them to the house of Michael Freal, greatly to the astonishment of that worthy individual.

The body was placed upon Norah's bed, and Thurston gave the Irishman a drink of whiskey, forced him to accept of a pound, and then dismissed him.

"One gone; let's look after the other," he said to Mezard.

The old rascal possessed himself of the locket, taking it from the dead woman's neck without the slightest compunction, and then expressed his readiness to accompany Thurston.

Telling Michael Freal that they would return on the morrow to attend to the funeral, and that he should be well paid for his care of the corpse, Thurston led the way into the street again.

The engines had now arrived, and the firemen were busily engaged in combatting the flames. But they had arrived too late to save the old house. They prevented the fire, however, from spreading, and kept it in its original limits.

As Thurston said, the old house was like tinder. It burnt up with a sudden flash, the roof and walls fell in, the water was poured in torrents on the smoking heap, and soon a mass of blackened ruin was all that was left to mark the place where it had stood.

"Good-bye to number two!" cried Thurston, heartily. "And new for the wedding. What do you think of my plan now? Has it not succeeded admirably? Is not the winning-post in sight?"

(To be continued.)

The manufacture of cigar-boxes at Bremen has, during the last thirty years, acquired an extraordinary extension. They were at first made with hand-saws, of the wood of sugar-boxes, received from Brazil. In 1840, the first factory in which circular steam-saws were used was founded at Bremen. There are now eight factories in the town, employing more than 800 workmen. These men are continually occupied in making cedar boxes. From twenty to thirty large cargoes of cedar wood are received from Cuba annually. In 1863, the Bremen manufacturers sent off 11,289 packages of boxes.

THE CRUELITIES OF GOSSIP.—I have known a country society which withered away all to nothing under the dry rot of gossip only. Friendships, once as firm as granite, dissolved to jelly, and then ran away to water, only because of this; love, that promised a future as enduring as heaven and as stable as truth, evaporated into morning mist, that turned to a day's long tears, only because of this; a father and a son were set foot to foot with the fiery breath of an anger that would never cool again between them, only because of this; and a husband and his young wife, each straining at the hated leash which in the beginning had been the golden bondage of a God-blessed love, sat mournfully by the side of the grave where all their love and all their joy lay buried, also only because of this. I have seen faith trans-

formed to mean doubt, hope give place to grim despair, and charity taken on itself the features of black malevolence, all because of the spell-words of scandal and the magic mutterings of gossip. Great crimes work great wrongs, and the deeper tragedies of human life spring from its larger passions; but woeeful and most melancholy are the uncatalogued tragedies that issue from gossip and detraction; most mournful the shipwreck often made of noble natures and lovely lives by the bitter winds and dead salt water of slander. So easy to say, yet so hard to disprove—throwing on the innocent all the burden and the strain of demonstrating their innocence, and punishing them as guilty if unable to pluck out the stings they never see, and to silence words they never hear—gossip and slander are the deadliest and the cruellest weapons man has forged for his brother's hurt.

JOSEPHINE.

I HAVE searched in vain for things

Full of beauty, full of light,

Paradising azure day,

Paradising ebon night—

Fountains of the silver voice,

Breathing to the earth, "Rejoice!"

Gentle birds with purple plumes,

Edenizing in summer blooms,

Breezes laughing music o'er,

Glowing Temp's myrtled shore,

Stars that tremble with their love

On the shadowy shrines above—

Vainly I have searched mid these

For some image worthy thee,

On thy beauteous mother's breast,

Chirping joy or sunk to rest

In thy perfect purity—

For too lovely is the scene,

Darling, little Josephine!

Too divine humanity.

In the infant such as thou,

Blooming with the sinless brow:

Gazing on thee, unto us

Images seen blasphemous

If from matter drawn—that sky,

Hidden from the mortal eye,

May alone the task fulfil:

So some seraph's heavenly rill,

May the young voice typify,

Or some inmost rainbow's grace

Show the splendour of thy face

By an evil yet untouched,

From all carking care yet free,

Like some angel soul that trusts,

Ever trusts in God and love,

That watches over purity.

Breathes there even one who holds

Song like this of thee too high?

Then he never yet has seen

Inmost of humanity—

Inmost—which is heaven itself,

Full of beauty, full of light,

Till it feel some cloud of sin

Stooping o'er with deadly night.

With thy noble father, now

Gazing on that beauteous brow,

Here I wait a prayer above

To the God of truth and love,

That this inmost of thy soul

Ne'er shall fall the black clouds roll,

But thus always 'twill be seen,

Darling, little Josephine!

W. R. W.

VICTOR ST. BRIDE.

CHAPTER I.

A SUIT REJECTED—MILITARY GUESTS.

On the 14th of October 1806—a day destined to be ever and sadly remembered in the annals of Germany—the Baroness Ida Von Arnheim, a young, beautiful, wealthy, and childless widow, was seated in the handsome drawing-room of her residence at Weimar. She was not alone.

Seated in close proximity to the fair lady was a gentleman wearing the rich court costume of the period.

Tall, well-formed, and eminently handsome, the Count Von Attenberg was still far from prepossessing. There was an ambiguity in his smile, an artificiality in his manner, however graceful, an occasional sinister expression in his eye, which had something repellant to a woman of the world so well versed in reading character as was the lovely baroness.

"I came, fair Ida," said the count, pursuing a previous train of remark, "to urge you to reconsider your decision."

"After my injunctions to drop the subject for ever?" replied the baroness, coldly.

"I do not remember that I gave my promise to obey madame," rejoined Von Attenberg.

"You have chosen an ill time to renew a suit utterly hopeless, sir."

"Pardon—it is at this moment, when the enemy is pressing onward, that it appears to me fitting to again offer you my hand, my name and my protection."

"Methinks, sir," said the baroness, with a scarcely-disguised expression of scorn; "that if you desire to extend your protection to one or all of your countrywomen, your place at this moment would be, not in the rear of the army, in the boudoir of a lady, but in the front, facing death in the ranks of our brave Prussians."

"Each one to his taste, my dear baroness," replied the count, with a shrug of his shoulders, though a slight flush of shame tinged his cheek. "I wasn't cut out for a soldier."

"Oh, if I were only a man!" said the baroness, clenching her little hand.

"But you are only a woman," said the count. "Consider your unprotected situation—alone here in this threatened city—your servants gone forth to meet the enemy, only a girl to bear you company—for I don't count poor old Father Franz, the priest, who hid himself away in some corner of the house at the first note of the artillery. Hark! what was that?"

"The same artillery which frightened a poor, old, paralytic man, but which seems to have sent the colour from your cheeks, most puissant and valorous count."

"By heavens! the sound draws nearer, baroness," said the count, rising. "Can our troops have been defeated?"

"If they have been—treble shame fall on the cowards who have remained at home during the battle!" cried the baroness.

The count gazed on the beautiful face, flushed with emotion, the sparkling eyes, the graceful figure, and heaved a sigh.

"I await your answer," he said, meekly.

"You have had it twice," replied the baroness.

"Under no circumstances of distress or misfortune, after no lapse of time, could I be induced to entertain your offer. I reject it utterly, and any attempt at a renewal of the conversation of this morning must lead to a suspension of even that interchange of cold civilities which our mutual position in the same social circle demands. I have the honour of wishing you good morning, Count Von Attenberg."

She rose as she spoke, and her words were pronounced with the air of a sovereign princess dismissing an offending vassal. Cowed, abashed, and indignant, at the same time, the count bowed low, and retired without a word.

As he descended the staircase, he muttered to himself, with a deep oath:

"That woman shall be mine, by fair means or by foul. I will humble her proud spirit before another sun rises and sets. Let the French come to Weimar—in the midst of the confusion I shall have an opportunity to carry out my plans. They will never interfere with me—I have a secret understanding with them, thanks to my diplomacy. And now to the court of the grand duchess, to play the patriot and hero, to tell what I would have done had I been in command of troops."

He flung himself upon his horse, and dashing his spurs into the animal's sides, rode off at a gallop to report himself at court. No one who witnessed his proud bearing, as he sat on his horse like a paladin, would have suspected that the Count Von Attenberg was, in his heart, an arrant coward.

Meanwhile Minna, the favourite maid of the baroness, had rushed into the presence of her mistress, all the colour fled from her soft cheeks, and her little heart beating as if it would leap from her bosom.

"Oh, madame!" she cried, "do you hear it?"

"The cannon? Oh, yes," replied the baroness.

"It comes nearer and nearer."

"It does, indeed, my poor girl."

"Yes, ma'am. And don't you remember poor Karl, that used to work in our garden?"

"Perfectly well."

"You know he would go for a soldier, and they put him into the hussars. Well, ma'am, he's just rode into the city, badly wounded, and when they took him off his horse, he said that our army was in retreat, and the French in full pursuit. Oh! we shall all be killed!"

"Do not be so foolish," said the baroness. "The French do not war on women. We may be plundered of our property, if this news be true, but they will surely spare our lives."

Here a terrific shriek burst from the lips of the affrighted girl.

A round shot from the enemy's guns struck the window of the opposite house, and dashed the sash and glass to atoms, as it went plunging through the building.

"We had better close the shutters," said the baroness, pale, but calm; and while her attendant stood rooted to the spot, incapable of action, the high-born lady, with her own hands, closed and fastened all the shutters of the front windows of the house, and made the doors secure.

She then sat down patiently to await the result. For hours the two women were compelled to listen to the roar of the heavy guns, to hear shells bursting in their immediate vicinity, to listen to the tramp and din of soldiery passing through the streets, to catch glimpses, through the back windows of the house, of lurid flames and volcanic smoke, indicating that here and there a furious soldiery, flushed with victory, and perhaps maddened with deep potations, had applied the torch to peaceful dwellings.

Night came, however, and the privacy of the baroness had not been intruded on. She began to think that her house had utterly escaped the notice of the enemy, and even Minna, by degrees, recovered her wonted spirits. However, she prudently prepared a sumptuous supper, thinking that, if any soldiers should invade her house, good treatment might secure them immunity from insult.

In the course of the evening, a thundering knocking was heard at the front door.

"Go down and open the door," said the baroness. "But stay—I will do it myself."

Before she had half-crossed the drawing-room, however, a tremendous crash was heard, followed instantly by footsteps and voices on the staircase. She paused, and calmly awaited the result.

"Ten thousand bombshells!" cried a rude voice in French, which the baroness understood perfectly; "these aristocrats don't keep open house, Victor. Shall we make a bonfire of the shanty?"

"Wait!" said a stern voice in reply.

In a moment more the speakers were in the drawing-room. One of them was a burly fellow, begrimed with smoke and gunpowder, the other a light, graceful, black-eyed youth, both dressed in the uniform of the grenadiers of the guard. They flung the door wide open, and advanced with charged bayonets.

"Halt!" said the stouter of the two. "Present arms! *Honneur aux dames!* Salute the ladies."

The younger soldier dropped the butt of his musket to the ground, let the barrel fall into the hollow of his left arm, gazed on the baroness sternly, and then glanced scornfully round the apartment.

"Gentlemen," said the baroness, calmly, "may I beg to know to what I am indebted for this visit?"

"Death and wounds, madame!" cried the stouter soldier, "we've been fighting all day, and are hungry as wolves. We've been on our feet for eight-and-forty hours, and require rest. What we want is a good supper and good beds."

"Peace, comrade," said the more youthful soldier, with a wave of his hands, and relaxing somewhat the sternness of his expression, under the influence of the grace and loveliness of the lady. "The fortune of war, madame, has authorized us to demand hospitality. This house is assigned us as our quarters. You have but to supply our needs, and, far from annoying you, you may rely upon that forbearance which a French soldier knows how to accord to the unfortunate and helpless. More—I pledge you my word and honour that we will protect you against any insult from any quarter whatsoever. And, the further to reassure you, let me inform you, madame, that so soon as Marshal Angereau arrives at Weimar, an order will be promulgated, punishing with death any Frenchman, soldier or private, who injures one of its citizens."

The countess bowed low, and invited her guests to accompany her to the dining-room. She and the young soldier took their seats at the upper end of the table, Minna and Bertrand at the lower. It is useless to say that ample justice was done by both the grenadiers to the sumptuous fare set before them.

CHAPTER II.

A NIGHT ADVENTURE.

AFTER supper, the baroness and the young soldier adjourned to the drawing-room, and they conversed together with the ease of old acquaintances, notwithstanding the abnormal character of the circumstances which had brought them together. In the course of their talk, the young soldier said:

"Madame, you have been good enough to give me your name. I can only respond by a half-confidence. My baptismal name is Victor—I am known by that in the army—yet my family is one of the proudest in France. They discarded me, however, because I embraced liberal ideas—turned me into the streets, in a word. My sympathies and my ambition led me to the profession of arms. Under the eagles of France I have carried a musket—it may be that a marshal's baton is reserved for me. This, however, I know, that whatever befall me, whether to die a private in

the ranks, or to live in command of a division, I have a heart equal to either fate."

The hour growing late, however, the baroness assigned rooms to her guests, and then retired. Bertrand had long been yawning, in spite of the bright eyes of pretty little Minna.

"Go to bed," said Victor to his comrade. "One of us must keep watch—let it be me; I can take my rest to-morrow."

"You were always a good fellow, Victor," said Bertrand, at the end of a prodigious yawn. "And it would be useless for me to play the sentinel, for I should be sure to sleep upon my post. Good night."

Victor sat down in the drawing-room, having first loaded and primed his musket, and prepared for his night's vigil.

The beauty and grace of the baroness had made a strong impression on him. For years he had led the stormy life of a soldier, without once mingling in the polished society in the heart of which he had been born.

This lovely woman brought back to him memories of peaceful life, of bright saloons, of radiant ladies, of mazy dances and of sumptuous entertainments.

Might he not one day, in happier times, fame and fortune achieved, the sword sheathed, aspire to her favour?

From the midst of dreams like these, he was aroused by a shriek in the corridor. Catching up his musket, he rushed into the entry, and at the farther end of it, just before the open window, he saw the baroness struggling in the grasp of a strange man.

"Help! help!" she cried, and bursting from the hands of the intruder, she rushed towards Victor, and sank fainting at his feet.

The soldier's wrath mounted like a blaze.

"Villain!" he shouted.

He had dropped his musket, and grappled with his adversary hand-to-hand.

The latter, watching his opportunity, made a snatch at the handle of a poignard he wore in his bosom.

Quick as thought, Victor disarmed him, and exerting all his latent strength, caught him up in his arms, and dashed him headlong through the open window.

"Where is he?" cried the baroness, at last restored to consciousness.

"I hope I have killed him," replied Victor. "Do you know him?"

"It is the Count Von Attenberg," replied the baroness, aghast. "One of the most influential men in Weimar, and more than suspected of being a friend of France. You are entitled to all my confidence, and I will withhold nothing. This man is a rejected suitor. He attempted to carry me off this night by force, and compel me to marry him. If he is at liberty, he will move heaven and earth to effect your destruction and ruin my fame."

Victor walked to the window and looked out. A neighbouring binnacle fire brought every object into full prominence.

"He must have got off unharmed," he muttered to himself.

"Hark!" said the baroness. "I hear the tramp of soldiers. They halt before the house. I hear the street door open. Minna must have admitted them. Fly—hide yourself."

"Where?" asked Victor. "They will search the house."

"There is one room they will not search," replied the baroness.

"What one?"

"My chamber." She flung the door open. "Enter, sir. It is the only place of refuge."

A guard soon made its appearance. Accompanying the officer in command was the Count Von Attenberg.

"Are you sure, count," asked the officer, "that you can identify the villain who attempted your life?"

"I could not see his face," replied the count, "but I think I should know him by his figure."

"He has hardly had time to escape," replied the officer, "and we will search every room in the house."

"Every room but one," said the baroness, advancing.

"Without exception," said the French officer.

"You will except, I know, my own private apartment," said the baroness.

"Certainly," replied the officer, bowing.

The baroness felt a load lifted from her heart.

In the meantime, the struggle had aroused Bertrand from his first sleep, and from his chamber door he had become cognizant of all that followed. He heard the officer in command say to Von Attenberg:

"If he is taken, he will be dealt with summarily. Fifteen paces and a volley will square his account."

A moment afterwards Bertrand presented himself, and saluted the French officer.

"Captain," said he, "I surrender without conditions."

"Do you know that man?" asked the officer of Von Attenberg.

"I know him," said Bertrand, saluting the count.

"He had a falling out with me just now—out of the window."

"You know the marshal's order," said the officer, sternly.

"By heart," replied the soldier. "Take me away. The sooner it's over the better."

"Permit me to speak one word with this man," said the baroness.

The officer in command of the squad assented, and the lady drew Bertrand out of ear-shot of the witnesses.

"You are innocent," she said, in a tremulous tone.

"I have confessed," replied the soldier.

"But you are innocent," pursued the lady.

"Be it so," answered Bertrand. "Victor saved my life in battle—I swore that I would repay the deed the next time his own was in peril. The hour has come, and I am ready. When the muster roll is called in heaven, I shall answer to my name."

"But Victor would never permit this."

"He must not know it till it is all over."

The baroness wrung her hands.

"I know not what to do!" she cried.

"Do nothing," returned the soldier. "Captain, I am ready."

"You shall be saved, if human power can effect it," were the last words of the baroness.

CHAPTER III.

TEN YEARS AFTER.

At the close of a fine October day, in the year 1816, a man of middle age, strongly built, with dark grey hair and moustache, and wearing a long, faded blue surcoat, buttoned closely to the throat, and a cap of the same colour, which had seen long service, knocked at the door of a stately house in Weimar.

It was opened by a corpulent, jovial, red-faced man, attired in a plain livery.

"This is the house of the Baroness Von Arneim, I believe?"

"It is."

"Is the baroness at home?"

"Not exactly—but I expect her."

"She lives here?"

"Not exactly, sir," replied the red-faced man.

"But this is her home?—that is, when she is at home, which is rarely. I am weary, having walked a long distance," said the stranger. "Have you any objection to my walking in and resting for a while?"

"None in the least, sir. The doors of this house are always open, though the mistress is rarely at home."

The stranger was ushered into the sitting-room, and the corpulent man who had admitted him basted himself in procuring refreshments—bread and cheese, and beer, of which the stranger gratefully partook.

"Pardon me, sir," said the red-faced man, "but though you speak German excellently, I thought I detected a little of the French accent."

"I came by it honestly," said the stranger. "I am a Frenchman."

"Your hand!" cried the red-faced man. "I, too, am a Frenchman. *Vive la France!*"

"*Vive la France!*" repeated the stranger. "But how comes it that you, a lover of *la belle France*, are settled down away here in Germany?"

"Ah! it's a long story, fellow-countryman," said the man. "I came here with the French army in 1806, this very day, ten years ago. This is between ourselves. I and a comrade were quartered in this house. He had a scuffle with one of the grandees of the place, and came near killing him. A guard came to arrest him. I confessed the crime to save his life, for he had once saved mine. Luckily, my affair was put off till the next morning, and, for want of a better prison, I was lodged in an outhouse. But my good angel was not asleep."

"Your good angel?"

"Yes, in the shape of as plump and pretty a girl as ever your eyes rested on. My angel cajoled the sentinels, gave them drugged wine, and when they were sound asleep, set me at liberty, and found me a secure hiding-place. The grand army marched away without me. In due time I emerged into daylight again, shaved off my whiskers and moustache, bade adieu to eagles and to glory, married my preserver, and became a steward, as my wife is housekeeper, to the Baroness Ida Von Arneim—the loveliest and most unhappy lady in the world."

"What is the cause of her unhappiness?"

"That is a secret known only to herself," said the ex-soldier. "All I know about it is that, a few months after the battle of Jena, she left Weimar suddenly, and went away somewhere—where, I know

She came back in a year, much changed in appearance, though still lovely, but with a sad, spiritual beauty, touching to look upon. She did not remain long, but went away to a country-house in Berlin, whither she was summoned by her father, old General Von Rastadt, who found himself in failing health. She always comes here, however, on the anniversary of the battle of Jena—this day—and generally remains for a few days. She is kind to us, gentle as ever—but something evidently weighs upon her mind."

"Has she shown no intention of changing her condition—of marrying again?" asked the stranger.

"None. She has had suitors—more than I can reckon on my fingers—but she sends them all to the right about in double quick time. This makes us think that her sadness is an affair of the heart. My wife, Minna, will have it that she lost her heart to my comrade, Victor, who was quartered here with me, after the battle of Jena. But I don't believe in love at first sight—not I! Victor was a fine fellow, however. I wonder what has become of him?"

"Killed, most probably," said the stranger. "Few of the old guard survived Waterloo."

"Ah! Waterloo! they were too much for the little corporal there. English, French, Dutch, Germans, all the world against him. But for the baroness I should have been forced to march against the emperor. But she saved me from conscription, and, thank heaven! Europe is at peace once more. But you must excuse me now, for I hear carriage-wheels, and it may be the baroness."

In a short time the door opened, and a lady appeared, accompanied by an old gentleman. It was the baroness and her father, General Von Rastadt.

"I am told you wished to see me, sir," said the baroness.

"Yes, madame," replied the stranger, with some embarrassment; "that is, if I have the honour of addressing the Baroness Ida Von Arnheim."

"That is my name, sir," said the lady.

Bertrand, and his wife, Minna, now a pretty dame, had entered the room, and were busy with some household arrangements, but, of course, their curiosity permitted them to lose nothing of what passed between the mysterious stranger and their mistress.

"Ten years ago," said the stranger, "a young French soldier, who bore the name of Victor, was a guest in this house."

"I remember him," said the baroness, in a voice shaken with emotion. "I have heard nothing of him since that day. I have supposed him—here the tears gathered in her eyes—"dead."

"He is not dead," replied the stranger.

The baroness raised her eyes to heaven, and clasped her hands, while her lips moved as if uttering a prayer.

"He lives, sir, you say?" she resumed, but deeply agitated.

"Lives, and is well. Moreover, he would present himself here if he thought you hadn't forgotten him."

"I thought he had forgotten me," said the baroness, in a low tone.

"Not for one moment," cried the stranger. "In the hour of battle—in the hour of victory—in the hour of defeat—at Moscow, at the Berezina, at Waterloo—he thought of you as the devoted thinker of his future saint. Look on me!" he cried, advancing into the full light of the apartment (he had hitherto kept himself in the shade). "Ida Von Arnheim, have you forgotten your poor Victor?"

He extended his arms, the baroness rushed to his embrace, and folded him to her heart.

"Are you not a little too demonstrative, my dear?" asked her father, uneasily, as he drew her away from the guest, whose faded surcoat and general shabbiness impressed him most unpleasantly.

"You know the incalculable service he rendered me," said the baroness, apologetically.

"Yes—yes, I know all about that," said the general, gently.

"Ten thousand bombshells!" cried Bertrand. "what a lot I was not to recognize my old comrade! If German beer and esauages hadn't muddled my brain, I should have known him among a thousand."

And he hugged his old comrade to his heart.

Minna, too, received an affectionate embrace and recognition.

"And now, sir," said the old general, stiffly, "pray tell me what I can do for you."

"I come, sir," said Victor, "to ask you for the hand of your daughter."

The blood mounted to the old general's face. He eyed the speaker from head to foot, in speechless indignation. At last he found breath to say:

"Upon my word, sir, you are a very modest man."

"I await your answer, sir," said Victor, placidly.

"Are you serious?"

"Quite serious."

"Very good, sir. Then I reply that my daughter,

with my consent, bestows her hand on no one who is not my equal in rank and position."

"That is very fair and proper," answered Victor, coolly.

"In the first place, then," said Von Rastadt, "I am a general."

"So am I," answered Victor, throwing open his surcoat, and displaying the uniform and insignia of his rank. "But I outrank you, for I am a marshal of France."

"I wear the cross of the Black Eagle," said Von Rastadt.

"And I the cross of the Legion of Honour," answered Victor.

"I am a baron of the empire."

"And I a duke and peer of France—the proofs are at your disposal. Though I followed my emperor to the fatal field of Waterloo, the king has restored me to the honours and estates of my race. As duke and marshal of France, may I, Victor St. Bride, call myself your equal, baron?"

"Give me your hand, my dear duke," said the old man. "I shall be proud of your alliance. Ida, what say you to this gentleman's offer?"

The baroness blushed deeply, but was silent.

"Shall I betray our secret, Ida?" asked St. Bride, taking her hand.

The baroness nodded assent.

"Then know," said St. Bride, "that this lady is already my wife."

"Your wife!" said the astounded general.

"Ten years ago to-night we were married in this house by Father Franz, an aged priest, who is still alive to testify to the fact. It was a night of terror—the night that followed the battle of Jena. I saved your daughter from forcible abduction, but by the act incurred the deadly enmity of the Count Von Attenberg. Soldiers were sent to arrest me—only one room in the house was sacred from search. That room—sacred as a holy shrine—no man living had a right to occupy but her husband. She hid me there. There, that no blot might rest upon her fame, our hands were united by a priest. But I, a poor soldier, never dreamed of calling her my own, though the church would have sanctioned my pretensions. I tore myself away from my generous benefactress, and followed the fortunes of war. I had released her from her vows, the moment they were uttered. But I did not forget her. I had before lived for glory—I now lived for love. I sought promotion at the cannon's mouth, because each step raised me nearer to her social level. Then came the fatal field of Waterloo. I survived the carnage, but I deemed my fortunes ruined by the event. The influence of my family, however, now once more, by the restoration of the Bourbons, replaced to their former rank, sufficed to procure an amnesty for the past, and open a path to the future. I was presented to the king, and he was good enough to say that he knew a soldier who had been as true as I had been to Napoleon would be true to his legitimate sovereign, now that the sceptre had irrevocably changed hands. Once secure in my position, I hastened to Weimar to find Ida yet free, yet loving, yet trusting, and oh, more beautiful than ever!"

"Very romantic and very irregular!" said Baron Von Rastadt. "Nothing equal to it in the annals of the Von Rastadts, and they date back to the time of Noah. But what's done can't be undone, though it may as well remain a family secret. That marriage was null and void. There must be a public ceremony."

"But you forgive us, father?" said Ida.

"Of course I do," said the old gentleman. "Cordially—entirely."

The duke and the baroness were publicly united in a few days, with all the ceremony and parade that the rank of the parties required. The grand duke and duchess were present on the occasion, and it was remembered long afterwards, that Goethe kissed the bride.

In the happy years that followed they divided their time between Paris and Weimar. Bertrand and Minna followed their fortunes, treated always rather as friends than as domestics. Indeed, when wholly alone, Victor and Bertrand fought their battles over again, and renewed the familiarity of their old campaigning days. But in the presence of company, the ex-grenadier treated his old comrade with the most punctilious respect, nor was he ever known to boast among his associates of his former intimacy with a peer and marshal of France.

F. A. D.

PRESENTATION OF A SWORD TO EARL SPENCER, AT ALTHORP.—On Wednesday morning, the members of the 1st (Althorp) Northamptonshire Volunteer Corps paid a well-deserved compliment to Major the Earl Spencer, by presenting him with a sword, as a mark of their sense of the services which he has rendered to the volunteers of that county, as well as

their personal esteem. The movement originated with the non-commissioned officers and privates, who without the knowledge of Earl Spencer, or even of the officers of the corps, subscribed for the purchase of a sword, and it was only at the last moment that Captain Beasley and his brother officers were made acquainted with it. At their request, the officers were allowed to join in the presentation, and the sword thus became the gift of the whole corps. The sword, which is an exceedingly handsome one, the blade being beautifully chased, was supplied by Mr. Henry Wilkinson, of Pall Mall. At the bottom of the blade is the maker's name, surmounted with the Prince of Wales's feathers. The sword and the scabbard are both remarkably handsome.

A GREAT MATCH.

ALL the village was thrown into a flutter of excitement when the news of Emily Harvey's betrothal first came out. Even the stronger sex, usually so disdainful of gossip, gave it a passing mention; while the ladies discussed it with that energy of interest and minuteness of detail which they are wont to bestow on such subjects. All agreed that it was a great match for a girl of her means and prospects; but this difference was discernible in their manner of regarding it. The gentlemen appeared to think that Emily's personal charms in some degree justified her good fortune, while the fairer commentators could only wonder at her success. There was nothing to be said against Emily, a nice, pretty, clever girl; but what a match for her! Mr. Lawrie, who could have had anybody! A man of such wealth and position! Why, he had a right to look among the very highest. That he had chosen Emily Harvey was another proof of how love goes by chance, and how it blinds the victim.

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey could scarcely regard the event otherwise than with a joyful pride.

Struggling for years on narrow means, compelled again and again to deny their child pleasures they longed to bestow upon her, it was a great thing for them to secure in all the advantages that wealth could bring; to feel that she had been appreciated in spite of unfavourable surroundings.

The only alloy in the mother's gratification was a little uneasiness that the match had been so sudden. But Mr. Lawrie was very much in love, and urged an early day; the general voice spoke highly of him; and, after all, would they have known him any better at the end of six months or a year?

A lover, of course, reveals only his most amiable qualities; probably nothing would transpire to show his real character any more clearly than they saw it now.

Then Emily talked so rationally about the matter; Mrs. Harvey was surprised at her good sense. With such tranquil, reasonable views of life, there was much less to be feared for her than for a romantic girl, who expected to realize in marriage some vision of impossible bliss.

In truth, Emily felt tranquil. She had made her choice, and believed it a judicious one.

Long acquaintance with poverty had not lessened her dislike to it.

Every day the worn carpets and ancient furniture of her own home looked shabbier in her eyes; every day she felt more and more the need of things which her father's purse, taxed to the utmost for daily necessities, never could supply.

This marriage would assure her future; she could do much, too, to assist her own family, and advance the prospects of younger brothers and sisters.

As for being very much in love with her suitor, she did not pretend it, even to herself; but was it necessary?

"These extravagant passions," she thought, "are all very well in novels, but there isn't much of them in real life."

At the words, a pair of dark eyes seemed to look out rebukingly from some corner of her inner consciousness.

"Or, if there is," she admitted with a half-sigh, "poor people cannot afford to indulge in it. They must learn to do without that, as well as many other luxuries."

Her husband would be an intelligent, well-educated, well-principled man; as such, she felt for him esteem and friendship; and that must do.

So the wedding came off, and the church overflowed with spectators.

People were amazed at Emily's beauty, set off for the first time by rich and tasteful dress. It was agreed that she was the handsomest bride that had been seen for years, and a credit to the place.

The customary tour was next in order. Emily laid aside her bridal raiment, and put on her travelling-dress with the deepest satisfaction.

Heretofore, everything of the kind had been associated with their ever-present lack of means and need of saving. The two-years-old mantle must be made over, and turned to something like the prevailing shape; mended gloves and ribbons of a former season were matters of course. But now all was so pretty and complete; the soft tint and Quaker-like neatness just suited her taste, inclining always to refinement rather than to show.

As the swift train bore the wedded pair over hill, through dale, the charmingly-gloved hand that lay in her lap, and was furtively pressed now and then by her companion, seemed to look up and congratulate her on competence achieved and comfort secured for life.

They went the ordinary round of people in their circumstances. The lovely bride of a man of wealth and standing, all sets were open to her, and she received abundant admiration.

For a week or so, no disenchanted influence disturbed her; it was all a whirl of pleasure and excitement, an almost fairy-land, to the quiet country girl. But as the gloss of novelty wore off, she grew uneasily conscious of a lack—a something yet wanting to complete felicity.

"It is a fancy," she said, and tried to throw it off; but it would return—would make itself acknowledged. What was it, she asked herself? She was well, surely, and indulged, petted beyond her utmost aspirations. Why did such a weariness at times come over her? Why did she recall, regretfully, the little pleasures of her maiden life?—the afternoon ride with father or sisters?—the coming home to a late tea?—the evening spent in sewing, while some one, maybe, read a book aloud?

What was there in such things to dim the splendours of gaiety and fashion? She wondered if other girls had ever felt so; if they had a kind of longing for their unmarried freedom, and the places and people they were used to? Few, to be sure, had been so constantly at home as she; it was only natural that she should miss familiar friends, and objects more than would those who were accustomed to society and change of scene. More than this she would not own to herself; would not admit the dreariness she found in being alone with the husband of her choice; would not think how happy she might be, all else unaltered, with her sister, or some girl-friend in his stead, and marriage only a far-away vision, dwelt on in idle moments. Perhaps she did not really suspect the truth.

"You are not well, love," said Mr. Lawrie, anxiously, one morning. "I am afraid the dancing and those hot rooms were too much for you."

"Oh, no," Emily answered, and, laying aside the book with which she had vainly striven to occupy her thoughts, exerted herself to appear cheerful, and to talk with him.

"Don't you think we have had enough of travelling for the present?" inquired the husband. "The weather is growing cool, and people are getting back to town. How should you like to go to my sister in the course of a few days? You know she has been urging a visit ever since we were married. We can stay with her till our own house is entirely ready, and she will be delighted to go about with you, and help select furniture, and all that."

"I should like it very much—that is, if it will please you."

"That is certain, if it pleases you," was the lover-like response. And after a little discussion, Mr. Lawrie went out to make the necessary arrangements. Emily's eyes did not follow him tenderly to the door; she was too busy with her own thoughts.

"This is just what I need," she said cheerfully to herself. "I did not understand my own tastes; I used to think I could never have too much of dancing and excitement, but I begin to fancy I am better fitted for domestic life, with regular duties, and only a little amusement now and then, for brightening up." A home of her own, with the housekeeping cares to which she was accustomed, and *carte blanche* for everything, would, she hoped, give to life the zest it lacked.

Emily had never seen Mrs. Dering, circumstances having prevented her presence at the wedding; but she knew her to belong to the *crème de la crème*; such cream, that is, as may be supposed to rise in the society into which Emily was about to make her entrance; the eyes of her sister-in-law would, no doubt, study her rustic *tout ensemble*, to see how it would do, and after that, she must stand the test before other judges. No wonder the thought of the first interview made her a little nervous.

A glance at the lady in question restored her self-possession. She had imagined a stately matron, made up in equal parts of fashion and *hauteur*; she saw a little woman, not very young, and considerably over-dressed.

It required about five minutes to take her measure. She was good-natured and insipid, with a most ex-

alted opinion of herself and her belongings, and an evident desire to patronize her new relation.

Patronage is not agreeable from those to whom you feel yourself superior, and a spirit of pride, hitherto unsuspected, rose up in Emily against it. The more condescending Mrs. Dering showed herself, the more quietly dignified the young wife grew.

The magnificence of the house, meanwhile, took her completely by surprise. Accustomed only to the simplicity of a village, almost any well-furnished town house would have been splendid in her eyes; and the gleaming marble, the lovely pictures, the hundred beautiful things around, appeared to her worthy of a palace.

But it was very clear that Mrs. Dering expected her to be overwhelmed, and the knowledge of that expectation served to steady her. Her features remained stoically impassive; she responded with formal politeness to all attempts at conversation, appeared entirely at ease, and by no means ardently interested.

She was determined to show that common-place little woman that it was quite useless for her to attempt any airs of superiority. They parted for the night with much courtesy, and a very small share of kind feeling.

But pride and unamiableness were new to Emily, and she lay awake half the night scolding herself most vigorously.

No doubt Mrs. Dering had expected her brother to make a brilliant match, instead of which he had taken a girl who had only "her face for her fortune." It was reasonable that the sister should be a little disappointed—a little inclined to condescend. Estrangement among relations was Emily's horror, and, sorely against her will, she resolved to try next day a more sisterly demeanour.

It required no great management or sacrifice of pride to conciliate Mrs. Dering. A little animation, a little interest shown in her plans and opinions, made her very amicable. After breakfast, she undertook to exhibit the house; but when the young wife, by great effort, brought herself to speak the admiration she really felt, the victory was complete. Longer acquaintance served but to confirm the favourable impression.

Emily's beauty and grace were everywhere admired, and the elegance of her manner formed the subject of Mrs. Dering's frequent praise in conversation with her brother.

"I don't see where she learned that quiet, finished dignity," she would say; "she was almost never out of that little country place, she tells me, and yet she is as incapable of a *gaucherie* as I would be myself."

This was high praise, for Mrs. Dering considered her own "air" the irreproachable standard.

Only one thing did not quite satisfy her.

"My dearest love," she began one morning, "will you pardon me if I say something very rude?"

"You have been so kind till now," returned Emily, smiling, "that I cannot bring myself to apprehend anything very dreadful. But pray speak on."

"Well, my dear, if you are certain not to be offended—it is about your dress. Your taste is exquisite, but your whole style is so very plain and quiet."

Emily coloured.

"You must remember," she said, with proud humility, "that our means were very small. I was obliged to purchase in conformity to them."

All that, Mrs. Dering considered, belonged to the past.

"But now," she urged, "it is very different. Edmund would be delighted to get whatever you fancied. You could have the loveliest things from Paris, if you would only signify a wish. Men never think of these matters; and he is so more than satisfied with you as you are," she added, kindly.

"I have not wished to spend my husband's money very freely. It is very different from what it would be had I brought him something of my own."

This little speech enchanted Mrs. Dering; she viewed it as containing an admission of previous inferiority and present elevation.

"What a sweet, sensible girl!" she thought; and then aloud, "you must never think of that again, my dear; Edmund could not possibly have married to please us better."

"And really," Emily added, "I don't care much for such things."

"Not care!" repeated Mrs. Dering, in amazement. "Such a face and figure, and not care for what sets them off? You must learn better than that. Now, trust to me a little," she added, persuasively; "let me order a few dresses and bonnets for you, and see if Edmund does not admire you more than he has ever done."

Emily dared not acknowledge to herself the feeling that shot through her mind—a sense of the utter forlornness of dressing to please Edmund's eyes.

"Tall women have so much the advantage of us little people," continued Mrs. Dering. "We have to dress very moderate, or we look overloaded."

Emily could not but laugh, though she was saying—
"You should have been in my place all these years, my dear," she said. "A person of very limited stature could have easily carried off all the dress that I was ever troubled with."

"Tall women are distinguished," pursued Mrs. Dering; "but some people," she added, hesitatingly, "think small ones the more winning."

"Oh, yes, decidedly," returned her companion. "I always thought my friend Kitty the dearest little thing, and she was just about your size."

All their intercourse was conducted in a like spirit of amity, and Mr. Lawrie rejoiced in the good feeling between the two most near to him.

Mrs. Dering put her heart and soul into the business of furnishing, and Emily did her best to follow. She tried to enter critically into the merits of damask and brocade, to feel the requisite enthusiasm over cut-glass and crystal; but, before she knew it, her mind would wander away to the little parlour at home, with the faded carpet and muslin blinds, and the old piano that she used to blush for!

How pleasant it all looked now! and her spirit fainted within her in the midst of the costly toys that once she coveted. The preparations grew burdensome long ere their completion, though Mrs. Dering had relieved her greatly. Still, she would not own to herself the true cause of her *ennui* and weariness.

"This kind of life is new to me," she said; "I am tired out with excitement and responsibility. When once we are quietly settled in our own house, it will be different. I shall try to persuade Mr. Lawrie to be very domestic this winter; I can't bear the thought of this endless round of society."

She forgot entirely that the entrance to "society," its affluence, its display, had been one great motive to her marriage.

Mr. Lawrie was not difficult to persuade; he was very much in love, and a *tête-à-tête* with his beautiful young wife looked by no means formidable; nay, her desire for it flattered him not a little. So the winter began.

Emily was fond of reading; she had but to cross the hall, and, lo! the library, luxuriously fitted up for lounging, while the best authors in the best binding, stood ready to her hand.

At home, the books had been but few; a good novel was a treat—a volume of her own, the rarest treasure—far apart Christmas or birth-day gifts. But there was a relish in the reading them, as she leaned back in the little chintz-covered rocking-chair, which those deep *fauvels* and creamy paper could not offer. She was fond of splendour; and what of richness or elegance did her dwelling lack?

Everything she wore, all that her eyes rested on, ministered to her love of the beautiful and refined. Society, too, refused to be kept utterly at bay; sufficient intercourse with it to prevent monotony, was quite unavoidable. Sometimes glancing around the brilliant circle of the opera, feeling herself a part, and no inferior part, of all its blaze and beauty, a moment's exultation would possess her; but it died out almost as it rose.

Day by day, she grew more dissatisfied and unhappy. She struggled against these feelings—struggled most of all to conceal them. Mr. Lawrie suspected nothing. In his eyes his bride was perfect, and her calm manner was only in keeping with the dignified style of her beauty.

Nor did her parents conjecture anything. They visited her when the new home was all in order, and the pleasure of the time was strangely mixed with pain. It was hard to conceal all from the loving eyes that watched her with such fondness—hard to play the part of a happy wife—a heart at rest; but she did it.

"How perfect everything is about this place!" her mother said, one morning.

They had gone over the house, and Emily had exhibited the piles of linen, the china closet, the dazzling array of silver, things so dear to the housewife woman.

"I never have wished to change places with any one, for I had your father; but I take such comfort in thinking that you will never know any of the cares and trials we have had."

And even as she spoke, Emily longed to tell her how poor and insufficient all these pretty, useful things appeared to her. And once her father, revelling in the treasures of the library, justly remarked that he knew of no merit in her that gave her the title to be mistress of a room like that.

It would have been a relief, she thought, to say how little happiness was found in it, or any portion of her affluence. But she kept wise silence. Their visit was a succession of enjoyments, the memory of which brightened for them many a dull day after, and they went home laden with gifts for themselves and the dear ones to whom they were returning.

When they were gone, and the household settled

back to its wonted course, the young wife no longer strove to deceive herself, or to deny the truth. She had made a great mis-step in life; her marriage had miserably failed to satisfy her. She had supposed a plenitude of this world's goods would make her happy—and an empty heart ached in her breast, and defied her to be even content. She learned her mistake, but too late for remedy. The choice was made, and she must abide by it.

Fortunately for herself, and the man who had given her an honourable love, she was neither weak nor wicked. She did not lay the blame of her trouble upon destiny, but acknowledged herself the cause. Nor did she seek elsewhere the happiness not found at home. Duty was plain before her, and she took it up courageously. I will not say she never faltered, but that there were not times when she was tempted to give up effort, and let life go as it would; but she triumphed at last.

Nor was she without reward, though it came slowly. There was much to esteem in the husband she had chosen; many valuable qualities, overlooked in the first bitterness of disappointment. She learned to regard him with a quiet affection, different indeed from the warm, spontaneous love of youth, but perhaps better suited for the wear and tear of real life.

Still, could one read her mind, it would be found that she considers herself as having thrown away the rightful joys of youth; as having lost, through her own fault, the roses that bloom so freely in that early time. And this privation she thinks her children shall never know; their existence shall be brighter, more beautiful than hers has been.

It is a natural hope, yet not perhaps the wisest; for there are no joys so sure, so lasting, as those which are the slow and painful fruit of discipline.

E. B. R.

SCIENCE.

THE belt round the world is being made. Telegrams can now be sent from London to Kiatchita, the frontier town of China, via St. Petersburg.

STONE-LIFTING BY FUNGI.—At Rickmansworth, Hert's, according to a correspondent, the stone floor of a tap-room and kitchen was lifted from its bed, and as the stones being removed some hundreds of mushrooms of various sizes and species were discovered, varying from 6 in. diameter to 1 ft., they being variously *Agaricus campestris*, *Agaricus Georgii*, and the *Oreades*, or fairy-ring mushroom. A still more remarkable instance was seen in the pig-sty at the rear of the premises. There were discovered under the stones several large specimens of the *Agaricus Georgii*, some of which were of the enormous weight of 16 lb. 2 oz., 14 lb. 7 oz., and 9 lb. 3 oz. The *Agaricus Georgii* has been known, according to Dr. Badlam's work, to weigh 14 lb., but here this was exceeded by two pounds.

SURVEY OF JERUSALEM.—Sir Henry James states that this survey is now in progress. The Dean of Westminster, on the part of the Bishop of London and other philanthropic and scientific persons, applied to Lord de Grey for the survey to be made under his direction, stating that £500, the estimated cost of the survey, would be placed at his disposal to defray the cost of it. This application received the sanction of Lord de Grey, and a party of non-commissioned officers and sappers of the Royal Engineers from the Ordnance Survey, left England on the 12th of September last, fully equipped. The party, Sir Henry says, is making very satisfactory progress. While the survey of the city is proceeding, Captain Wilson has been exploring under ground, and has made some important discoveries to elucidate its ancient topography, the most important of which is the discovery of "one of the arches of the causeway which led from the city to the Temple, in a very good state of preservation, the span of which is between 40 ft. and 50 ft., and composed of large stones like those seen in the Jewish walling-place."

DISCOVERIES IN CONNECTION WITH PEAT MOSS.—We hear from Stornoway, says a Glasgow paper, that a product likely to prove invaluable has been successfully extracted from peat moss, by Mr. H. Counter, manager of the extensive works erected by Sir James Matheson, bart., for the utilization of the peat on his estate at Lewa, by converting it into oils and paraffin. Mr. Counter was struck with the apparent lubricating property of a preparation made by him of the tar distilled from the peat. By way of experiment, he resolved to test its powers on the axles of his own gig, which was driven from 16 to 18 miles daily for some three months, and on examination at the end of that period, it was found to answer beyond his most sanguine expectations, the axles and bushes being in capital working order, and containing enough of the material to last as long again. He immediately took the precaution of protecting it by a patent, and it is

now used on railways, and consequently well adapted for all descriptions of vehicles, such as carts, waggons, carriages, &c., being equal to any other grease in the market, and infinitely cheaper. Subsequently, Mr. Counter discovered that the product of the distillation of peat possessed qualities of still greater value, having found, as we were informed, by an actual experiment, that it acts as an excellent preventive of the fouling of ship's bottoms. This discovery has also been covered by a patent.

VALUABLE MINERALS IN CALIFORNIA.

We often hear outside of California of the high value and extended use of metals and minerals which abound in immense deposits in the Pacific domain. Bismuth, which is extensively used in type-making and the mechanical arts, and is now very high and scarce, is said to be found plentifully in some of our mineral formations. Antimony exists in immense masses, and of very rich quality, near the Tejon, and can be carted away from the top of the ground. It is said to contain a handsome ley of silver. Zinc and tin, which are now very expensive metals, are met with in valuable lodes in the counties of Mono and Los Angeles. Chromic iron is found in immense abundance in Monterey and other southern districts. Iridium, osmium, and platinum are not scarce in the gold washings of Klamath and Del Norte counties, and discoveries of these have also lately been made in Idaho. The sulphur deposits of Clear Lake and those of Nevada Territory are on a magnificent scale and of the purest quality.

Borax, nearly free from extraneous matter, can be gathered by bushels, and there is no end of it, seemingly, in all the mountains of Lake county, where obsidian, or volcanic glass, ready to make wine-bottles at a blow, is as plentiful as the world wants—a true mine of glass. Of porcelain clay of the finest quality there is a like quantity; and of amber, terra sienna, paint ochres, of different colours, manganese, and magnesian earths, there is great plenty. As California has some of the purest aluminous clays in abundance, the new metal aluminium could likely be profitably made. As to coppers, soda, alum, jasper, agate, chalcodony, hematite, and such substances, there is no end of them.

It would be interesting and important to the owners of lands in which the various minerals above mentioned exist, to learn the markets and places of demand for them in Europe and the Atlantic states, and the prices which they ordinarily command there. Perhaps some correspondent who is familiar with the subject may have a few words to say about it.

THE Thul Ghaut incline on the Great Indian and Peninsula railway, upwards of nine miles long, is now completed. The level of the base is 940 ft., and of the summit 1,912 ft. above the sea, the amount of ascent being consequently 972 ft. This is somewhat less than the Bhore Ghaut, but that the amount of work has not been much less may be gathered from the following facts:—The work consists of 13 tunnels of an aggregate length of 2,652 yards; there are six viaducts, ranging from 66 ft. to 250 ft. long, and from 60 ft. to 200 ft. high. The total quantity of cutting has been 1,241,000 cubic yards, and of embanking, a slightly greater amount. The maximum depth of cutting is 600 ft., and maximum height of embanking 90 ft. The expense was estimated at £45,000 per mile, or upwards of £4,000,000 to cross these few miles of mountain path.

SURVEYING AND PHOTOGRAPHY.—At the Academy of Sciences, Paris, in the *séance* of the 12th ult., General Morin presented, on the part of M. Lamsadat, Professor of the Polytechnic School, a new and perfectly successful application of photography to topographical and other surveys. In this instance, the plan was one of Grenoble and the environs, to a scale of one in five thousand, extending over 20 square kilometres, obtained by two photographic lenses of 50 and 25 centimètres focal distance. With these in 60 hours, at distances varying from 1,500 to 4,530 metres 29 views were taken from 18 stations. These views were transported to Paris, and studied and reduced in the office, a plan having been laid down as perfectly as could have been done by the ancient mode, after several weeks' or perhaps months' labour on the ground.

TRIAL OF THREE STEAM FIRE-ENGINES.—On Tuesday, the 3rd inst., the land steam fire-engines constructed by Shand, Mason, and Co. for the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Company were tested at the Grand Surrey Docks, in the presence of Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Davis, and Mr. Smith, on behalf of the railway company. Several engines of the same description (Shand, Mason, and Co.'s improved horizontal) have been supplied for Russia, and two for the London Fire Brigade. One of the latter has been in constant use for nearly four years, and the other for three years. This last was worked with great success before the jury of the International Exhibition of

1862. One of these three engines, being the thirty-ninth constructed by Shand, Mason, & Co., started with steam of 100 lbs. pressure, obtained in twelve minutes from lighting the fire, and another in ten minutes and a half with 40 lb. steam, the thermometer standing at freezing, and the temperature of the water being the same as that of the atmosphere. Various size jets up to 1½ inches diameter were used, water being delivered in a body 180 feet from the jet, and in one, two, and four streams at a time. The greatest number of revolutions made was 160 per minute, and at this speed the engine worked with complete steadiness and regularity. These engines are primarily for protecting the property of the company, but will also be used at all fires within reach, the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Company thus taking the lead in introducing this powerful fire-extinguishing agent in our great Indian dependencies.

USES OF PETROLEUM.—Hitherto this mineral oil has been exclusively spoken of as an illuminating substance, and as such it has least as many advantages as it has friends. But it possesses also other qualities, the value of which is less open to dispute. It may become one of the most important auxiliaries in the art of dyeing, in which it is calculated to produce quite a revolution, it having just been discovered that it contains the principles of aniline, the well-known vegetable base derived from indigo, and which is now so commonly used for producing splendid rose-coloured stuffs. Aniline has hitherto been obtained by treating indigo with a concentrated solution of potash, whereby a brownish oily substance is formed, which, by distillation, yields pure aniline, a clear colourless liquid, having the smell of wine, but a corrosive and poisonous taste. The salts of aniline are also colourless, but rapidly assume a mellow rose colour on exposure to the air. White wood dipped into a solution of a salt of aniline takes a deep yellow colour. Hydrochloric acid turns these salts green, blue, or black, according to the concentrated state of the solutions. For the present, experiments are still in progress for extracting aniline from petroleum at a cheap cost, and there is every reason to suppose that these efforts will be crowned with success. Certain odoriferous ethers may also be extracted from petroleum.

THE
KEEPER OF THE FERRY.

By the Author of "The Bondage of Brandon."

CHAPTER XXXI.

ALL ALONE IN THE WORLD.

Duke—Then, why then
Fare thee well, Guido, for it must come to that;
At last, farewell! Yet whoso'er you go,
Still, do not quite forget Miranda.
You have had happy hours and pleasant thoughts,
And I—I have had some—
I thought I had a word or two to say.
But they are gone. The common things, perhaps.
Men say at parting. Barry Cornwall.

BEFORE Mr. Montague Capel made his ignominious hegira from Rickerton, he left a letter directed to Mr. Pope, appointing him guardian of his two nephews, and investing him with great powers. A portion of the rents were to be set aside for their special use, while the remainder, and, indeed, the minor portion, was to be remitted, by an appointed agent, to the unfortunate exile at the place of banishment he had selected.

Of course, the mournful death of the unhappy Lady Elms was bruited abroad. Mr. Roscoe Bollingham was looked upon as a curiosity. Had he discovered the source of the Nile, he could not have been invited to more parties, or feasted and fêted to a greater degree than he was. He did not spare the owner of Rickerton; he abused and vilified him to the utmost limit polite language would permit him to go.

The name of Montague Capel became a by-word and a reproach. His memory was execrated.

In Mr. Capel's hurry, he totally forgot to make any mention of Arthur. The poor boy was overlooked; and this was the more unfortunate, because the brothers, Ernest and Sinclair, detested him most cordially. They had never liked him; and lately their hatred to him had become intensified. He was more accomplished than themselves—he could do everything better than they could. For instance, he could shoot with more precision, ride with greater skill and ease, swim with more rapidity, and outstrip them generally in all athletic exercises.

In addition to this, he was intellectually superior.

Mr. Pope was especially proud of his promising pupil, and prophesied great things of him in the future. There is something very delightful to a man who teaches others to meet with a person, young or old, who can sympathise with him, and enter into the

spirit of his teaching—whose ideas harmonize with his own, and whose faculties unite with him in a mystical masonic bond.

In the dilemma in which Mr. Pope was placed, by the omission of Arthur's name in the letter he had received from Mr. Capel, he thought that he could not possibly be blamed for acting in a generous and large-hearted way.

To say to the boy, "Go, take your departure, for you are no longer wanted here," would have been, in Mr. Pope's opinion, to have indulged unnecessary harshness, and to have been guilty of the grossest barbarity.

What could a lad of Arthur's age do without introduction? and even with introduction, it is difficult to achieve a position, or even make an income, upon which to live in London, or in any other city. The great evil of the present day is that we are overpopulated. There is work enough for a million, and yet there are three millions of candidates for the work. Eighteen shillings or a pound a week, is eagerly grasped at by those whose talents and duties are worthy of much better remuneration.

Mr. Pope determined to exercise his own discretion. He resolved in a way which did him infinite credit, that he would keep Arthur at Rickerton, and continue giving him the instruction that he had formerly received.

One day, shortly after the Lady Elma's funeral, he spoke to the three boys.

"Mr. Capel has left England," he said, "on account of a terrible domestic calamity which has befallen him. He has, during his absence, which may only be temporary, confided you to my care."

"All of us?" inquired Sinclair, who was of an inquisitive disposition.

Mr. Pope could not conscientiously reply in the affirmative to this pertinent question. So he handed Mr. Capel's valedictory letter to the boy, saying:

"Here is your uncle's letter; read it for yourself, I have no objection."

Sinclair did so, and almost immediately exclaimed:

"He says nothing about the Australian."

"He has omitted to mention his name," replied Mr. Pope, hesitatingly.

"I'll be bound he has left him out on purpose," continued Sinclair. "He will find it expensive abroad, and he, no doubt, thought that he could not any longer keep people whom nobody knows anything about. Perhaps there is no particular harm in being picked up at sea; but, for my part, I'd ever so much rather be rocked in a cradle, and nursed by those who know me."

Arthur sat still during these remarks, which were unkind and cutting. Mr. Pope looked at him as if begging him not to reply. Arthur seemed to understand the signal, for he gave the tutor a responsive look, and bit his lips. His was a fiery and a passionate nature, and it cost him a severe struggle to remain quiet when he was attacked in the coarse and point-blank style which Sinclair always adopted when speaking of him.

"Nevertheless," exclaimed Mr. Pope, "I consider it my imperative duty to extend your uncle's hospitality to Arthur."

"Arthur!" repeated Sinclair, "Arthur what? why don't you finish it? You are fond of derivatives and patronymics."

This was true. One of Mr. Pope's favourite amusements was the study of proper names, tracing their origin and their mutation through many centuries, during which many languages were grafted upon the parent tongue and the pronunciation suffered, and was depreciated in consequence.

"Never mind what his name is," replied Mr. Pope. "If I might be allowed to form an opinion from his general conduct and behaviour, I should be inclined to say that he was very much better bred than either yourself or your brother."

This retort caused Sinclair to colour up, and he had sense enough to avoid a recurrence to the subject. He changed the battle to another ground, and said:

"Your opinion, or the opinion of anyone in the inferior position in life, in which it is your misfortune to be placed, affects me very little. I was talking about the Australian, or Sir William, as my uncle, Mr. Capel, was in the habit of calling him, and I assert, and am prepared to maintain, that he has no right at all in this house. My brother and myself will most likely inherit my uncle's property at his death, and I repeat that the Australian is an interloper, who has done all he can to supplant us in our uncle's affections. His motive is transparent enough. He saw that he had tumbled into a good thing, and he wished Mr. Capel to make the will in his favour. He might have succeeded, but providentially Mr. Capel has been removed from the sphere of his influence. I, for one, protest against his being allowed to remain at Rickerton."

"I agree with my brother!" said Ernest.

Mr. Pope was a philosopher. He had been so much

insulted during his lifetime, and so much knocked about, that he could put up with a great deal of provocation; consequently he did not lose his temper at Sinclair's rude and insolent remarks.

"Where is he to go, supposing he leaves this house?" he said.

"Where? That is nothing to me. Give him five pounds. I dare say he will find employment. You have told me a hundred times that he is cleverer than we are, and that nothing will keep him down when he makes a start in the world. It is a pity that so much talent should be lost. It will be for the advantage of mankind for him to start at once. An admirable Crichton can never want employment of a lucrative nature."

"Young man," said Mr. Pope, sternly, "the observations which have fallen from your lips this morning only serve to disgrace you in the mind of every rational being. You have insulted my grey hairs; but I am an old man, and my blood is cold. That is fortunate for you. I can tolerate your contumacious remarks, but I cannot too strongly condemn the language you have made use of with reference to this poor boy, who has no friend, no home, and no protector but your uncle."

"He has deserted him," said Sinclair, sullenly.

"You have no right to say that, sir. He has omitted to mention his name."

"It would be difficult to do that."

"Why?"

"Because he hasn't one," replied Sinclair, with a coarse laugh.

Again Arthur bit his lips, and seemed to chain himself down to the chair on which he was sitting.

"Mr. Capel may have forgotten his—his protégé, and I feel myself fully justified in extending hospitality and protection to him until I have express orders to the contrary. I am inclined to look upon the omission of his name from the letter as an oversight. Let us put it down to haste or carelessness."

"My uncle was never hasty or careless," said Sinclair.

Arthur opened his lips; but Mr. Pope checked him, saying:

"Pray be silent."

"I cannot, indeed, Mr. Pope," said Arthur, in a nervous voice, the gentle cadence of which showed how perturbed he was.

"I beg of you—"

"Ask me anything else. I must speak."

"Oh! let him speak," said Sinclair. "Nothing he can say will hurt my feelings."

"Whatever my father may have been!" exclaimed Arthur, "I am positive that he was never guilty of the crimes which are imputed to your uncle."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Sinclair. "What do you think of that, Mr. Pope? He has abused his benefactor—the man who saved him from being drowned, who lodged him, clothed him, educated him, trusted him as his own son. There is gratitude for you! I would sooner have bitten my tongue out than have said such a thing, had I been in his position. He is an ingrate!"

"I respect Mr. Capel, and am grateful to him for his kindness to me," said Arthur. "But I feel myself perfectly at liberty to comment upon his actions, which are matters for discussion all over the country."

"It is all very well to make excuses; but it is evident to me that you only care for my uncle for what you can get out of him or his."

"You accuse me of that, do you?" said Arthur, calmly.

"I do?"

"You assert that I am both base and mercenary?"

"I condemn you on your own words."

"Very well," responded Arthur, with the serenity he had observed all throughout. "If that is your opinion of me, I will prove it false."

Sinclair smiled incredulously.

"You may smile; but your smile affects me as little as your sneer. I know your hate. I know you have hated me ever since I came to reside at Rickerton. You have been jealous of me; for I have proved myself a better man than either you or your brother in everything in which we have mutually engaged."

"That is self-glorification, if you like," muttered Sinclair.

"I will leave Rickerton," continued Arthur. "I shall experience the deepest regret in parting with Mr. Pope, who has always been my kindest and dearest friend, and to whom I am under so many obligations. I will go away this afternoon. I will take nothing with me, but what I stand upright in; and I will not receive a single penny to help me on my way from anybody."

Both Sinclair and his brother looked up in surprise. They had not anticipated such a noble and disinterested response from the despised Australian.

"My dear boy," exclaimed Mr. Pope, "listen to me; I entreat you to listen to me. What madness are you about to be guilty of? You will perish by

starvation on the way. You will have to depend on the casual charity of those you meet. My dear boy, I must beg of you not to be so rash. You are foolish in the extreme. Believe me, you are. This house and this property does not belong to Sinclair. He has, or ought to have, no power over you."

Arthur paid no attention to Mr. Pope. He took his watch and chain from his waistcoat-pocket, and placed them on the table, his purse soon followed. Then he put on his cap.

"That is all I have," he said. "Mr. Capel gave it to me, and I return it to him."

He moved towards the door.

"Where are you going?" said Mr. Pope, running after him.

"I don't know."

"You don't know?"

"No. I trust to fortune."

"But she is fickle and capricious."

"So much the worse for me," said Arthur.

"Stop a moment. Listen to me," said Mr. Pope.

"No, no. I have been grossly insulted."

"Not by me."

"I have been told to go, told by one who has more right here than I have. By one who has the right of consanguinity, which I have not. I must go, dear friend. I cannot stop. Although I am young, I have some pride in my composition. I am not to be trodden upon."

Seeing that he was painfully excited, and that to offer any further opposition would be worse than useless, Mr. Pope refrained from saying anything further.

"Good-bye," he exclaimed. "Fare thee well, my boy. Heaven be with you. May I beg of you to write to me."

"I will not fail to do so."

With these words on his lips, Arthur left the room, proving himself a true son of his father.

He did not so much as look at Sinclair or Ernest. He shook off the dust from his feet, and made a long farewell to Rickerton.

Mr. Pope's eyes filled with tears, and he said, in a low tone:

"There goes the best lad that ever lived. Well! well! It is the way of the world. God help me! My whole life has been a series of disappointments, and this is only one more added to the already swollen total."

CHAPTER XXXII.

MR. LISTER EXHIBITS HIS CLOVEN HOOF.

To-morrow! ay, to-morrow, further word, Than those repeated, none from Lara heard, Upon his brow no outward passion spoke, From his large eye no flashing anger broke; Yet there was something fixed in that low tone, Which showed resolve, determined, though unknown.

THE morning had been fine, and the sun had shone brilliantly; but the afternoon was wretchedly wet, and Mr. Lister got thoroughly soaked before he reached the keeper of the ferry's cottage.

The rain descended in a thick, continuous shower. There was no escape from it. To some men there is a sort of plaintive music as rain falls amongst the leaves, but the steward of Barkendale was not poetical.

He only knew that the drops insinuated themselves between his shirt-collar and his neck, and made him feel extremely uncomfortable. He was much rejoiced when he reached the water-side. The keeper was standing on the threshold of his cottage-door, smoking a pipe.

It was somewhat remarkable that he did not appear glad to see Mr. Lister. At all times he had held out the hand of welcome; but, on the present occasion, he put his hands in his pockets, and looked steadily before him, pretending not to see his visitor.

"Good day to you, Goodall!" exclaimed the steward.

"Good day, Mr. Lister!"

"Rather wet."

"A trifle so."

"Looks likely to last?"

"Well! I can't say as I see any signs of its giving over just yet."

"Much business doing?"

"Very little, I am sorry to say. Only been over twice to-day."

"Ah!" said Mr. Lister. "The weather accounts for that."

"It does so."

"People will not travel more than they can help in such weather as this."

"Worse luck," replied the keeper of the ferry.

"Missie at home?"

"She be in."

"And Molly?"

"I don't know."

"I'll step inside, out of the wet."

"As you please!" said Stephen Goodall, moving a little on one side.

Mr. Lister was surprised beyond measure at the coolness of the keeper, but he attributed it to a reaction in favour of Tom Harvey. It was only reasonable to suppose that such a reaction would set in; and he was overjoyed to think that he had spoken to Sir Thomas Wicherley, and could threaten the keeper with the deprivation of the ferry if he proved contumacious, and refused to let him marry his daughter.

The steward was anxious to know how Molly was. She had shown every symptom of having recovered her senses on the appearance of Tom Harvey, in the little church at Flushing.

On entering the cottage, he found Mary Goodall sitting at a table, writing a letter. Her mother was superintending the cooking of a hare, whose savoury odour indicated that the keeper of the ferry intended having something nice for his supper.

"Good evening, Mrs. Goodall!" exclaimed the steward.

Mrs. Goodall gave him a nod.

"How are you to-night, Molly?"

Mary did not lift her head from the paper.

"Very busy both of you, eh?" said Mr. Lister, smiling.

"I'm busy, I've no time to talk to anybody," replied Mrs. Goodall.

"At any other time she would have said:

"Dear me, how wet you be! Quite soaping, I declare. Come inside, and take your coat off. Dear heart alive, you'll catch your death of cold as, sure as I'm a born woman. Now what's it to be, whiskey, or with a slice of lemon. I know you and the keeper like a glass and a pipe. Sit down, and make yourself at home."

"Don't let me interrupt you," said Mr. Lister.

"No fear of that; nobody interrupts me when I'm not in the humour."

Mr. Lister walked over to Mary. She looked up at his approach.

"You are better, I'm glad to see!" he exclaimed.

"Very much better."

"Your head is clear?"

"Oh! yes, all that indistinctness has gone away."

"How fortunate. I cannot find words to express my gratification. I am really very much delighted."

"Thank you," she replied, composedly.

"May I inquire to whom you are writing?"

"Oh! yes."

"What is her name?"

"It is a man."

"A man?"

"Yes."

"I'm surprised that you should write to a man, and confess the fact to me."

"Why should I not confess it to you?"

"Simply because of the relations that exist between us."

"What are they?"

"Is it possible that you can ask? Have you so soon forgotten? Is your memory once more defective?"

"No. Thank heaven, my memory is strong and vigorous. All my faculties are healthy again."

"Has the church at Flushing escaped your remembrance?"

"No," said Molly, earnestly. "I shall never forget it as long as I live."

"And the marriage—"

"There was no marriage."

"But the marriage that was to be?"

"Ah! that is another thing."

"Is that forgotten? Your promises—your consent—your affected love for me—is that thrown into the limbo of the past?"

"It is disregarded, Mr. Lister," Molly said, sternly.

"And why so?"

He demanded this with equal sternness.

"Because I was not in a position then to come to a fitting conclusion upon any subject. My mind was diseased. Now that its former tone is restored, I am conscious of only one love, and that's for the man who ever held my affection."

"You mean—"

"Tom Harvey, to whom I am now writing."

"He is in prison."

"He will not always remain there. I am acquainted with some one else, who, if his deserts were recognised, would join him there."

Mr. Lister's face clouded, but he did not think it either prudent or advisable to prolong the conversation on that subject.

"Am I to understand, Miss Goodall," he said, "that you refuse to fulfil a compact solemnly entered into, which was witnessed and approved by your parents?"

"I am not conscious of the existence of such a compact," she said, quietly.

"You are not?"

"No."

"Pray be a little more lucid; explain that enigma to me?"

"I should not have thought that it needed any explanation; but as you seem to think it does, you shall have one. For some time I have not been a free agent. I have been grievously afflicted. My mind was a chaos of various ideas, such a confused mass, in fact, as the world was before the creation of man. I understood nothing. I could not reduce it to order."

"Your language is a little high-flown!" exclaimed the steward of Baskerdale. "Will you answer my question in so many words?"

"Certainly, I will. What is your question?"

"Do you refuse to marry me?"

"I do."

At this reply, Mr. Lister was silent. For fully a minute he looked at Molly, who returned his gaze without flinching.

She was very pale, but her pallor added to her beauty. It is possible for rustic beauties to be too rosy and fresh coloured.

"Are you in earnest, Mary?" said Mr. Lister.

"Very much in earnest. I am writing now to Tom Harvey, to tell him that I will be his as soon as he is liberated, and I am endeavouring to explain how I came in the singular position in which he found me. My explanation is, that I was not answerable for my actions."

"You will not marry me?"

"Not for worlds. I am astonished that you, Mr. Lister, of all men, should have the hardihood to ask me to do so. I firmly believe that it was you who attacked Tom Harvey and nearly killed him at Fenny Drayton."

"You believe it?"

"I do believe it," replied Molly, positively.

"It matters little. You may believe what you like. You have no proof. It is all bare assertion. If you will not marry me, I must take measures to compel you."

"Compel me, Mr. Lister?" said Mary Goodall, with an incredulous smile. "Oh, no; that is impossible."

"We shall see about that. I must have a little conversation with your father. He is a sensible man. He will listen to reason. We shall see what he will say to one or two matters I have to broach to him."

Mary Goodall bowed, and said:

"Have you done with me?"

"In what way?"

"Have you anything further to say to me?"

"Nothing at present."

"I wish you good evening then, as I wish to go on with my letter."

Mr. Lister determined to make one more appeal before he left her, and said:

"Shake hands with me, Molly."

"Why?" she demanded, elevating her eyebrows.

"For old lang syne."

"I—I would rather not. Pray excuse me, Mr. Lister," she replied.

"Do you dread me? Is there anything repulsive about me?"

"In my eyes you are red-handed, and you know the fable of the countryside."

"I do not."

"It is this. To touch the palm of a red-handed man is to bring a curse upon one's head."

Mr. Lister bit his lips, and walked away without a word. The keeper of the ferry was still standing at his door, smoking his pipe.

"Goodall!" he exclaimed.

"Sir, to you," replied the keeper.

"I want a word with you."

"Fire away, then! there is no one to overhear us. The porch will keep the rain off us. Mrs. Goodall is cooking, and Molly is writing a letter. Out with it, man, if thou hast anything on thy mind. I'll be a priest to thee, and hear thy confession."

"I have been received coldly to-night, Goodall."

"That's likely enough."

"You were all friendly enough, a day or two ago."

"Ah! a day or two ago we thought Tom Harvey dead and gone; but now that he has turned up we have changed our minds, and think that he is the man for Molly."

"You must be mad, Goodall! your daughter was mad the other day. Perhaps it runs in the family. Tom Harvey is only a groom, and he is in prison for smuggling, or something worse."

"Don't you say that," said the keeper of the ferry, with rising anger. "Tom Harvey's an honest man, if other people are the reverse. Don't say anything about Tom. He's a good sort, and mustn't be slandered, if he be in Brownish Gaol."

"Well, well, he's a man for whom I have not the slightest regard, and he is not worth talking about. Let us talk about your daughter and myself."

"By all means," replied Stephen Goodall, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, charging it, and lighting the tobacco with an evil-smelling lucifer-match.

"Now look here, Goodall," said Mr. Lister, in his most impressive manner, laying his hand upon his auditor's shoulder as he spoke. "You are anything

but a fool, and your wife is a shrewd woman. Tom Harvey's little better than a beggar. What are his wages? Seven or eight shillings a week. Is that enough to keep a wife upon? In addition to that, he will find it difficult to obtain employment after coming out of gaol. People in this world are not very charitable. They do not ask why a man has been in prison; the fact is sufficient for them."

"Miss Wicherley will have him, if that's all."

"You are not sure of that."

"I haven't much doubt."

"Supposing she does not, can you keep him?"

"I don't know—I have not tried; but I don't mind," replied the keeper, stoutly.

"I'll trouble you for a light," said Mr. Lister, producing a cigar.

The keeper tendered him the glowing bowl of his pipe. He thought that the conversation, which was not altogether pleasant, was over; but he was disagreeably mistaken. The worst part of it was yet to come.

Mr. Lister puffed a cloud of smoke into the damp and heavy air, and said:

"How long have you had the ferry, Goodall?"

"Nigh upon sixteen year, come midsummer."

"Your father had a lease of it?"

"Yes, so he told me."

"His lease, if I am correctly informed, was a fifty years' lease?"

"That's right enough."

"He did not get his lease till he was forty-two?"

"He must have been about that age. He was a Flushing boatman before he took it."

"He was seventy-seven when he died?"

"That was his age to a minute, as one may say, for he died on his birthday."

"You admit all I have advanced?"

"Every word of it."

"Thank you. Perhaps you are not aware that your lease expired some months ago, that is to say, last midsummer, and that you are nothing better than a tenant at will of Sir Thomas Wicherley's?"

"Eh! what's that you're saying?" exclaimed Stephen Goodall, changing colour.

He had no idea that his lease had run out, and he was not a little dismayed at the intelligence, although he did not anticipate any disastrous results from the circumstance.

Sir Thomas Wicherley had acquired the character of being a good landlord, and the tenants on the Baskerdale estate were in the habit of speaking in his favour. So Goodall thought, that if he went up to the hall and asked for a renewal of his lease, he would have no difficulty in obtaining it.

"Listen to me, Goodall," said Mr. Lister. "I have no wish to do you any harm, but you know that I have the management of Sir Thomas's property, and that I can dismiss a tenant if I choose."

"What has that to do with me?"

"You will know if you will have the goodness to hear me out!"

"I'm a listening," said the keeper, who was ill at his ease.

"I suppose you wouldn't like to give up the ferry?"

"Give it up? I'd just as soon you took me out and shot me."

"Exactly. That is what I thought."

"Why, man, I've nothing to fall back upon. I have only the ferry to get me a living, and I'm kinder used to it. I don't think that at my age I could turn my hand to anything else. I don't, indeed."

"You know Manning, the fisherman at Flushing?"

"Yes. I know him well enough."

"He was up at the hall to see me yesterday."

"What about?"

"I'm going to tell you," replied Lister. "He asked me if it was true that your lease had run out, and he replied in the affirmative. Then he told me that he was willing to take the ferry, and would give five pounds a-year more than its present owner, meaning you, and he offered me a handsome present into the bargain. I replied that I would let him know about it in the course of a day or so."

"Sir Thomas wouldn't turn me out," gasped Stephen Goodall, letting his pipe fall to the ground in his agitation.

"I tell you, my good fellow, that Sir Thomas has nothing to do with it," replied the steward, "he has left it all to me. I can do what I like. I can turn you out, and put Manning in."

"I'll go up to Baskerdale and see Sir Thomas."

"As soon as you like."

"He'll listen to me. I'm an old servant."

"That don't matter. He has not forgotten your insolence to him and Hindon when they crossed over on their arrival here."

Stephen Goodall appeared dumb-founded, and could not say a word.

"I don't want to be harsh with you, Goodall," Mr. Lister exclaimed. "You may stay here as long as you like, provided—"



[ARTHUR RECOGNISING HIS FATHER'S PORTRAIT.]

"What?" the keeper demanded, almost fiercely.
 "This: let me marry your daughter, and you shall do as you like. You shall not pay any rent without you wish it. In point of fact, you shall be entirely your own master. You understand me? Let me marry Molly, and Manning shall not have the ferry. Oppose me, thwart me, and he shall."

Stephen Goodall groaned, and, hanging down his head, made no answer.

Mr. Lister, steward of Baskerdale, glared at him with the eye of a basilisk.

CHAPTER XXXIII

MISS WICHERLEY SEES A FAMILY LIKENESS.

Shades of the dead, have I not heard your voices
 Rise on the night-rolling breath of the gale!
 Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,
 And rides on the wind o'er his own highland vale.
 Round Loch na Gair, while the stormy mist gathers,
 Winter presides in his cold icy car,
 Clouds then encircle the forms of my fathers—
 They dwell in the tempests of dark Loch na Gair.

This wind moaned shrilly through the trees, and swept with a mournful cadence over the moors as Arthur left Rickerton to seek his fortune in the wide, wide world.

He knew not where to go, and he had not a half-penny in the world.

He wandered along in a purposeless manner for some time, until it struck him that the most prudent course he could adopt would be to seek the keeper of the ferry, and to ask for that protection which had been so freely and so kindly afforded to him before.

It was clear that Mr. Montague Capel's house was no longer a home for him, and he gave up the idea of ever returning to Rickerton.

The direct way to the cottage inhabited by Stephen Goodall was past Petrel House; and, although ignorant of this fact, he made the discovery by dint of pertinacious inquiry.

It was late, and day was drawing to a close when he reached Fenny Drayton.

He had walked a long way, and was weary and footsore, so much so, indeed, that he felt it incumbent upon him to rest for a brief space.

He saw a large house before him. Lights gleamed from the windows, and the deep baying of a hound resounded through the courtyard.

"This is some gentleman's house," he said to himself. "The servants will not drive me away if I ask for a crust of dry bread and a glass of water. I feel I must have it, unless I am to drop down on my

journey. Stephen Goodall's must be some distance yet, and I feel my strength giving way."

He went to the front of the house, and passing through some iron gates, walked towards the front door.

As he did so, a carriage dashed past him, and deposited its living freight a dozen yards in advance.

He continued to approach, and a lady who alighted caught sight of him.

It was Miss Wicherley, who had been to Bromwich on an eleemosynary expedition, and has just returned to Petrel House.

"Who is that boy, and what does he want?" she exclaimed, to her footman.

"I don't know, ma'am. He is not about the place. I'll go and see what he wants."

"Do so."

"Well, my little man!" exclaimed the servant, "what are you doing here? This is private property, and you're trespassing."

"I don't mean any harm," replied Arthur. "I'm hungry and thirsty, and came to beg a crust and a glass of water."

"Go round to the back door, and you shall have it."

"No, no, William!" exclaimed Miss Wicherley. "Let the little fellow come to me. I wish to speak to him."

Arthur was not in the least timid. He followed the servant into a handsomely-furnished apartment, and was met by Miss Wicherley, who looked at him in surprise, saying:

"You do not look like a poor boy. You are dressed well, and have the appearance of a gentleman's son. How is it that you are begging for bread and water?"

"I have been staying at a place called Rickerton, some distance from here," said Arthur; "but, owing to recent events, I have thought it best to leave."

Hitherto the room had been illuminated only by the light of the fire.

William, at this juncture, entered with a handsome candelabra, massive and exquisitely chased, as if by the subtle fingers of a Benvenuto Cellini.

"Rickerton is the property of Mr. Montague Capel, is it not?" said Miss Wicherley.

"Yes, it is."

"Ah! I have heard painful rumours of late. Are you a Capel?"

"No."

"What is your name?"

"I do not know."

"That is strange," said Miss Wicherley, reflect-

tively. "How did you first come into this part of the country?"

"I was wrecked off the coast."

"Wrecked?"

"Yes. My father was drowned, but Stephen Goodall saved me, and brought me to the ferry."

"What was your father's name?"

"I cannot recollect," replied Arthur.

"Come closer to me, little boy," said Miss Wicherley. "I wish to examine your features closely."

She was very pale, and her lips were tightly compressed together.

She drew him to the table, so that the light might fall upon him.

She gazed steadily and anxiously at him; and then exclaimed, in a faint voice, as she grasped his arm in a nervous hold:

"It cannot be. Some strange fancy is flitting through my mind."

Arthur was much bewildered at the lady's strange manner. He was at a loss to account for her excitement.

"Would you remember your father's name if you heard it repeated?" Miss Wicherley asked.

"I think I should."

"Was it Mason?"

Arthur shook his head.

"Evans, Manchester, Sullivan, Wicherley?"

"I think that was it," he said. "Only my father was always addressed as Sir William; and so I seldom heard his other name."

"Great heavens!" exclaimed Miss Wicherley. "This is miraculous."

Leaving the boy in an abrupt manner, she walked to the other end of the room, and took up a book of portraits.

This she carried to Arthur, and placed upon the table before him.

"What am I to with this book?" he asked.

"Turn over the leaves, and see if you can recognise your father. Should you know him again?"

"Oh, yes."

He turned over the leaves in a hasty manner until he came to a well-executed portrait of Sir William Wicherley.

Without a moment's hesitation, he put his finger upon it, and exclaimed:

"Here it is! This is my father! How did his picture come into your possession?"

"My dear child," said Miss Wicherley, throwing her arms round his neck, and sobbing hysterically, "I am your aunt. Thank God for this! Thank God! thank God!"

(To be continued.)



THE SWORD MAKER OF TOLEDO.

CHAPTER V.

Why any secret?
I love not secrets. Mark what I will do!

Goethe.

The residence of the Duke of Valcusa was built of stone, in the Moorish style, with a wide inner court entered through a lofty arched gateway, and presented a handsome appearance with its three stories, profusion of latticed windows, arches, &c. In the centre of the court an alabaster fountain sent up its musical jets of spray, while snowy swans sailed languidly about it, curving their long necks to pick up fragrant floating leaves.

In a large saloon or reception-room of this palace sat the Duke of Valcusa, absorbed in thought evidently of no pleasant nature. His brows were contracted, and a look of deep sadness rested on his countenance.

Around him was a most lavish display of taste and wealth.

The lofty room was arched in the shape of a crescent, and supported by slender alabaster columns, with sculptured niches filled with marble flowers as natural as life, yet never losing their snowy purity and freshness. The ceiling was of cedar, and inlaid with ivory, mother-of-pearl, and polished silver, which reflected back the light as from a mirror, with a thousand shimmering prismatic rays, that seemed like some celestial rainbow. Exquisite fretwork ornamented the walls, the most delicate and elaborate arabesques covered the ceiling, perfectly coloured blossoms twined about the glittering columns, creeping upward in luxuriance, and, greatest wonder of all, every one of the tiny blossoms held a tiny chalice of rare perfume, distilled from the flowers they so perfectly represented; the floor was of vari-coloured marble in a beautiful mosaic pattern, and the furniture, so rich and tasteful, accorded with the Moorish character of the apartment.

The duke was suddenly aroused from his abstraction by the sound of tramping in the street outside, and by a loud knock at the door of the court.

He arose and went to the latticed window, looking down upon the small crowd who were already separating and returning to their homes, but saw nothing of the cause of their collection.

The next moment the door opened, and the Count Garcia was borne into the room by a couple of servants and laid upon a silken couch.

"What is the matter?" cried the duke, regarding the

[THE ESCAPE BY THE SECRET STAIRWAY.]

blood-stained form of his son with alarm. "Is the count injured?"

"It's nothing, father," said Garcia, crossly, he having recovered his senses on his journey home. "Just send some gold pieces out for the men who brought me home, and don't stand there like a frightened woman."

The duke sighed, and handed the money to his servants, as directed; and having dismissed them with the order that a physician be sent for, said:

"Ciro, I request you to speak more respectfully to me—at least, before the servants. I also demand an explanation of your wound?"

"Bother! How you do stick to a subject!" said the count, sulkily. "I had a duel, if you must know, and got a little the worst of it!"

"Who was your opponent?" demanded the duke, standing beside his son.

"Only a miserable citizen—too far beneath me to be my opponent, if I could have helped it. He was only a low sword-maker, Juan Montes!"

"Juan Montes!" repeated the duke, in astonishment.

"How came you to fight with him?"

Garcia gave a blundering explanation of the cause of his late conflict, and the duke demanded:

"Your trouble was about a girl, eh? What girl?"

"The daughter of Ben Israel, the Jew. But I have not given her up, by any means. I shall have my revenge on Montes, and on the girl."

"Ciro!" said the duke, with stern emphasis, "if you do aught to injure this young girl, or Juan Montes, I shall disown and disinherit you! I would to heaven that you were like young Montes—so noble in appearance, so honest and truthful. I saw him to-day for the first time, and my heart thrilled strangely at the sight. You speak of his being beneath you, but in reality he is as far above you as the sun is above the earth."

"Indeed!" sneered Garcia. "What a pity that he is not your son!"

"I would he were!" responded his father, bitterly. "I should then have comfort and happiness, whereas now my life is made bitter by your evil conduct. I hear frequent complaints of you, that you use your influence to tax the hard-working citizens, and you know that such injustice is visited by them upon the unoffending Jews. Such conduct on your part must cease, Ben Israel's daughter must be unmolested, and Juan Montes let alone, or I will publicly disinherit you, and denounce you to the king. I know that you stand high with him, but my influence is far more powerful than yours, and I shall use it if you force me to it."

Count Garcia did not reply, save by a sudden

darkening of his sinister countenance, at which his father became deathly pale, and said:

"How strange! With that look upon your face, Giro, you remind me of the only enemy I ever had—a man as dark and evil in his ways as the associates of the Evil One himself! I never noticed it before, but you look strangely like him."

"You are complimentary," sneered Garcia. "Pray who may this enemy be?"

"He was a Jew," responded the duke, thoughtfully, "though none the worse for his Hebrew blood! He was born in India, and was tainted with Hindoo ideas, full of subtlety as the wildest Brahmin, and as cunning as a serpent. He came to Toledo in his youth, with India stuffs to sell, and saw and loved the lady who afterwards became my wife. He proposed to her, and was rejected for me. On the occasion of our marriage he vowed a terrible revenge upon us both. There might have been some *hauteur* in my Octavia's rejection of the fellow, on account of his insufferable presumption; but I know that her manner was gentle, and even sisterly to him when they parted. But, notwithstanding his horrible oaths, he never visited his wrath upon us. Octavia brightened my home for a couple of years with her dear presence, and when died a few days after giving birth to a son, leaving you to my love and care. And meanwhile the Jew had left Toledo; returning to India, I suppose, for I never heard of him again."

"Quite a little romance," said the count. "And so I resemble that amiable Jew?"

"You do at this moment, Giro, as you did when I spoke. It is most singular!" and the duke sighed heavily. "You have never been a loving son to me," he added. "There has always seemed to be some secret antagonism between us two, so that I could never pour out to you the parental love that filled my heart. And you have only yourself to blame for this coldness between us, my son."

"Oh! of course, I am to blame," said Garcia, with a sinister smile. "I am to blame that my old nurse seemed to regard me with aversion from my infancy up; that you and I have never cared for each other, that my tutors have disliked me, and that I have never been appreciated till of late."

A deep shadow rested upon the duke's countenance as he replied:

"Old Tomasina, your nurse, had a most unaccountable dislike to you; but then you were a most stubborn boy. But, to leave these unpleasant retrospections, I will again assure you that if you do not obey me in this matter of Juan Montes and Ben Israel's daughter, I shall carry out my threat against you."

"Well, it's nothing to me, of course, beyond an hour's sport," said the count, with a jarring laugh. "I'll have nothing more to do with either of them, if you insist upon it; but I should like, of all things, to marry that little Jewess."

"I should have no objection to your marriage with her, Ciro," responded his father; "but, from what you have said, I judge that Juan Montes loves her, and is loved in return. Consequently you had better not see her again."

Count Garcia bowed, with meek submission, and said:

"It seems to me, father, that you think more of their happiness than of mine. Juan Montes is a fortunate youth to have inspired so sudden and deep an affection in the wealthy and powerful Duke of Valclaus."

The duke seemed agitated; and, after a pause, replied, in husky tones:

"I will be frank with you, Ciro, and tell you the reason why the young sword-maker has taken such a deep hold upon my mind. You are aware that, for several generations, the males of our family have been distinguished for their slender hands and long taper fingers?"

The count assented, and cast an involuntary glance at his own thick hands and short stumpy fingers.

"When my son was born," went on the duke, "he had a distinct mark of a crescent shape upon his wrist—a mark that the physician assured my anxious wife would remain as distinct through his lifetime. After my wife's death I was for some time absorbed in my grief, to the entire neglect of my infant son. When I roused myself to an interest in him, I found that the mark upon the wrist had disappeared."

"Well?" demanded the count, as his father paused.

"What of it?"

"This!" responded the duke, with increased agitation; "Juan Montes has that same peculiar crescent mark upon his wrist, and his hands are like mine."

Count Garcia glared upon his father in astonishment.

"But Juan Montes declared the youth to be his own son," mused the duke, forgetful, for the moment, of his companion. "It is a singular coincidence."

"I see nothing singular that I had a mark on my wrist that disappeared, and that this low-born sword-maker has a mark that remains," declared the count. "I should think, from your singular talk, that you were in your dotage."

"Speak more respectfully to me, if you please," said the duke, sternly. "You forget yourself, sir."

At this juncture the physician was announced, and the count's wound was examined and declared to be trifling and dressed, and he was then removed to his own chamber, to refresh himself with sleep.

"We'll see," muttered Garcia, as he sank into his downy bed. "I've stilled the old man by a promise, and my way is open before me. That Syria shall be mine, and I will have my revenge upon that Juan Montes, who steps between me and love, as well as between me and my father. I will sweep him from my path—so help me, ye Powers of Darkness!"

With his evil smile still on his face, he fell asleep.

CHAPTER VI

You are silent?

You look at me with such a hopelessness?

What have you to object against your father?

The Piccolomini.

It was evening, and several days subsequent to Syria's meeting with Count Garcia.

The maiden sat in her secret bower, in the midst of light and perfume; but her face was pale, and in her Spanish eyes was a look of deep suffering, such as only a tortured heart can produce.

Illuminated volumes lay around her; her harp was ready for the evening song; the table was laden with delicacies for their supper; and everything was awaiting the entrance of Ben Israel, who at length made his appearance, clad, as usual, in his vestments of dainty linen and silk.

"Why so sad, my darling?" he asked, tenderly, coming to her side and laying his hand upon her glossy waves of hair. "Are you thinking of Juan Montes?"

"Yes, father," replied the girl, blushing as she lifted her truthful eyes to his. "But I am not repining—that is, I am trying to school my heart to accept whatever you decree. I have given my promise, father, to give him up and think no more of him as a lover, unless with your consent!"

"And that you can never have!" said Ben Israel, firmly. "Dismiss all thoughts of him from your mind, for Rafael Ezra is on his way to Toledo to claim his bride. And now cheer up, Syria, and let us have supper and music, for I feel strangely sad to-night!"

Syria made an effort to throw off her sadness, kissed her father affectionately and then summoned Esther, and the trio sat down to supper.

The meal was eaten in silence, a cloud seeming to rest upon each member of the little group; the table was then cleared, Esther withdrew, and Ben Israel said:

"Syria, Count Garcia called on me to-day. He looked as if he had been ill from his wound, and his manner was very insolent and overbearing!"

"Count Garcia here!" exclaimed Syria. "What did he want?"

"Money. He demanded five hundred pieces of gold, refusing security of any kind, and telling me that when I got it back again he'd like to know it!"

"Why, father," said the girl, "you didn't let him have it, did you?"

"Yes, dear! what else could I do?" returned Ben Israel, bitterly. "As he told you, he has but to speak a word, and I am ruined. From his manner, I dread that he will use his influence against me. I wish to remind you of the secret vault, where you will find my wealth, if anything should happen to me—"

He paused instinctively, as a low and sudden roar from the streets penetrated through the heavily-draped walls, and he arose to listen.

"What is it, father?" cried Syria, springing to her feet, her face white, and wearing a startled expression.

"It sounds like a maddened populace," replied Ben Israel. "Perhaps they are sacking the rabbi's house. I will see."

"Oh, do not go out, father!" pleaded Syria in sudden alarm. "I beg you not to show yourself to the citizens. It cannot help others if you do, and may injure us."

Ben Israel soothed his daughter, promising not to expose himself needlessly to the mob, and then clasped her in an affectionate embrace. They listened and waited.

Louder and louder sounded the roar, and nearer and nearer it came, until the father and daughter were thrilled with terror and apprehension.

"What if they should be coming here?" cried Ben Israel. "My God, help us!"

While he stood, as if paralyzed at the thought, Esther rushed into the room, agonized with fear, and exclaiming:

"The mob is turning into this street. What shall we do?"

Seeing the two she so deeply loved so paralyzed, Syria recovered her self-possession, and her voice was low and even as she said:

"We are not the only Jews in the street, father. But let us see for ourselves if they are coming here. We have a secret way of escape, if the worst comes."

"My brave child!" exclaimed Ben Israel, recovering his calmness—"you are right. We will see if we are the intended victims of to-night's slaughter."

He caught up a massive lamp, and rushed out of the room, through the closet into the kitchen, closely followed by the two women, and hastened to a front balcony, from which he could have a perfect view of the street below.

Shouts of terrible meaning were borne to their ears, the name of Ben Israel was repeated with shrill cries by scores of the members of the black mass hurrying toward the money-lender's dwelling.

Lights flashed, torches flamed, yells and groans resounded, and still onward came the mob, until they had blocked up the narrow street on each side of the house.

"Come down and open the door!" cried a voice that Ben Israel and his daughter instantly recognized as Count Garcia's. "If you don't, it will be the worse for you."

A momentary silence succeeded.

Syria crept close to the side of her father, and in the mingled light of moon and lamp was distinctly revealed to the mob below.

Every trifle in her costume and appearance was instantly noticed by thousands of fierce and angry eyes.

Her dress, which looked like frosted silver, sprinkled with diamond dew, shimmered in the light; the jewels on her person glowed and shone like imprisoned sparks of fire, and her royal beauty, more than all, attracted malevolent glances.

"See the Jew's daughter!" cried a notoriously idle fellow in the crowd. "See the diamonds scattered on her dress, sparkling in her hair, and on her neck and arms. Do our daughters dress like that? One gem from her person would enable each one of us to live at ease the rest of our lives! The Jew himself is better dressed than a Spanish grandee! They fatten upon us—let us take their wealth!"

"Remember the girl is not to be harmed!" cried Count Garcia, standing on the steps that led to the office.

"Not to be harmed!" cried another voice. "See her beauty!"

With a demoniac yell, the speaker led on the mob to the attack.

Groans and shrieks resounded as some of the popu-

lace were trampled under the feet of their comrades, the torches were waved frantically, and a furious assault was made upon the door.

At the same moment Ben Israel, Syria, and Esther stole from the balcony, hastened into the secret rooms, fastening every door behind them, and hastily caught up enveloping cloaks and hoods to disguise themselves.

"The hour I have dreaded so long has come!" groaned Ben Israel. "These goods for which I have toiled will soon be scattered by the idle and thrifless people; but, thanks to my prudence and foresight, all my wealth is secure. Come, we have no time to lose!"

Syria cast a last glance at the pretty bower, looked at her chirping birds, as if bidding them an eternal farewell, and with them the peace and joy of her life; and then choking down a sob, she followed her father into the secret stairway, which they swiftly descended.

As they reached the bottom, they paused instinctively, and listened to the horrible din and noise above them. The door creaked and groaned like a human being, and the next moment it was burst in, and the blood-thirsty mob rushed into the dwelling.

"They will have to search long before they find the opening to the secret rooms," said Ben Israel, in a low tone. "Some of them are coming down into the cellar, and others are tramping upstairs—but we are safe!"

As he spoke, he held the lamp down to the flooring at the foot of the staircase, touched a hidden spring, and a small trap-door flew up. Through this aperture they all passed, closing the door behind them, and found themselves in a narrow subterranean passage, where their light cast ghostly shadows, and where the tumult reached their ears in faint murmur.

Stealing along this dim corridor, they went on and on, their garments brushing the walls on either side as they passed, until they reached a flight of stone steps that terminated the passage, and ascended through a trap-door into the silent and deserted synagogue.

"We will wait here a little while to rest," said Ben Israel, nestling the tiny form of his daughter in his breast, as he seated himself on a cushioned bench. "Extinguish the light, Esther, and sit down. I have a key to the door, and we will soon get to Rabbi Benjamin's."

And thus in darkness, with wildly throbbing hearts, they waited to rest.

In the meanwhile, the mob, with Count Garcia at their head, had dashed up the creaking and dusty stairs into the kitchen and other open apartments of Ben Israel's dwelling, uttering loud cries of disappointment at not finding those whom they sought.

"Where can they have gone?" cried Garcia, when the cellar and the entire house had been explored, with the exception of the hidden rooms. "There must be some hiding-place that we have not fathomed, since they cannot have left the building."

"Burn them out!" cried several voices; "fire will drive out that dainty Jewess, and we will pick her of her diamonds as we would pick a chicken of its feathers!"

"There must be some secret closet!" exclaimed Garcia, his voice sounding far above the din, as though used to command such lawless wretches.

"Bring beams, and we will soon unearth our rats."

Beams were brought, the light of flashing torches applied to every crevice, walls sounded and beaten in, and finally the old clothes closet adjoining the kitchen was dismantled of its garments, and its walls investigated.

"There's nothing here!" cried one of the men, beating the concealed door with his beam. "We shall have to give it up. Ho!"

This last word was shouted as the door flew open, and the secret bower revealed in all its beauty to the astonished besiegers.

(To be continued.)

THE WORD "KNIGHT."—Can any one tell me the origin of our term knight? The Latin equivalent simply meant a horseman, and the German synonyme is *ritter*, a rider or horseman. So also the French *chevalier*, and the corresponding word in Spanish, Italian, &c., showing that the term had one signification originally in all languages, save our own—viz., a horseman or possessor of a horse for military purposes. But our term knight is so totally different from all other corresponding appellations, that it suggests the idea of a difference of meaning, in our own language (in its original application), to that which it had with other nations.—*QUESTER*. [The name of knight, as an honorary title in England, is Anglo-Saxon *cnyht*, signifying puer, servus, or an attendant. Tooke derives it from *cnytt*: the past participle of *cnyttan*, to knit, netere, alligare, attacher, and thus signifying *un attaché*: one attached, connected with bound to. Verstegan observes: "This title of right

worshipful dignity was heretofore, by our ancestors, written *knicht*, and both in the high and low Germany by the name of *knicht* (which a little they vary in the orthography), is understood a *servant*. It may seem strange (he adds) how our name of knight, being with us of such esteem of worship, should, in the etymology thereof, appear no more than it doth. To resolve with difficulty I can judge no other, having no proof or pregnant reason otherwise to induce me, but that the name of knight must have begun to be a name of honour among our ancestors, in such as were admitted for their merits to be *knights to the king*, that is, to be his own servants, or in some sort his officers or retainers, and to ride with him."—"On Decayed Intelligence," ch. x. In our instance we still continue to use the meaning of the German *Knecht*, in the knight of a shire, who serves in parliament for a particular county.]

The Emperor of Morocco consulted the astrologers as to the expediency of having telegraphs in his country. They slept on it, and told him next morning that it was an infernal and unlucky machine. Doubtless the emperor thought it would be so to them, and not to him, for he has given the concession, and the penalty of disturbing the wires is merely a head.

ALL ALONE.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "Self-Made," &c., &c.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

UTTER DESPAIR.

From short, unnatural, and disturbed repose she awoke: how happy had she waked no more! Yet that were vain, if dreams invade the grave. She woke, emerging from a sea of dreams. Tantalously wherever wrecked, desponding thought From wave to wave of bitterest misery At random drove, her helm of reason lost. Though now restored, 'tis only change of pain— A bitter change, severer for severer. The day too short for her distress; the night, Even in the zenith of her dark domain, Is sunshine to the colour of her fate!

Young's Night Thoughts.

WHEN Gladys awoke from the swoon produced by the chloroform, the first object that met her opening eyes was the same that, ten minutes before, they had closed upon in apparent death—the balmy, green, glazing eyes of her mortal enemy.

And the first feeling of which she became conscious—*it*, indeed, it could be called a feeling—was that of utter despair.

Despair, not only of her own power, but of God's providence. Despair that saw no light in earth or heaven. But despair such as no one should indulge for a single instant, even in the darkest trials of life.

Gladys, however, was very young, very far from perfect, and had been very bitterly wronged. And, besides, I doubt if the best of us, placed in her circumstances, would have proved better Christians than she did.

Mrs. Llewellyn's cat-like eyes, brimful of malignity and triumph, were fixed upon her. Those of Gladys met them unflinchingly; not in defiance, but, as I said, in despair.

"Well, my pretty ward, I have caught you at last! A fine time I have, taking care of you during your minority! But I have got you safe once more, and you shall not escape me again!" said Mrs. Llewellyn, hissing forth the words between her teeth.

"I do not care—I do not care!" screamed Gladys. "You will die, sooner or later! Perhaps I shall kill you! I won't if I keep my senses; but you may drive me mad; and then, spite of all you can do, I shall kill you! For the mad are very cunning, you know, and they find out means of deceiving and destroying that would never occur to the sane!"

"You will not go mad; your Llewellyn brain is too strong. It may become eccentric from its very strength, but never insane!" coolly replied the woman.

"Very well! I don't care! If I do not go mad and kill you, at least you must, of course, die some time or other; or, at all events, it is certain that the world will some day come to an end; and then, Mrs. Jay, then you will go to your doom! And I shall glory in your torment and your despair! yes, I shall."

Then, and more wild and wicked words poor Gladys uttered in the frenzy of her despair. Who was accountable for their exceeding sinfulness? Not Gladys, perhaps, but the wretched woman through whom the "old-noon" came.

While Gladys was still raving, and the carriage still going at full speed, she caught a glimpse of a horseman riding towards them from the opposite direction. In an instant the hope of escape once

more presented itself to her, and she dashed open the window and screamed:

"Help! help! for heaven's dear sake, help!"

But just as she saw the horseman throw himself from his horse and seize the head of the leader—just as she hoped for rescue—she herself was caught back by her captor, held fast, and suffocated by a handkerchief saturated with chloroform.

When once more she recovered from the effects of this powerful agent, she found herself whirled rapidly along the forest road, that was now momentarily growing darker under the advancing shadows of night.

She spoke no more; but in the anguish of her soul she reproached heaven and earth.

It was Mrs. Llewellyn who had the "floor," and did all the speaking. And bitterly she taunted her victim with her utter helplessness and hopelessness.

But through all that dark night journey Gladys spoke no more.

As day dawned, they passed out of the forest into the more open country, and by the first beams of the rising sun they saw before them a village.

As they entered the village, Mrs. Llewellyn again chloroformed her patient, so that, when she drove up to the village tavern, Gladys, in a state of complete insensibility, was lifted from the carriage and conveyed to a private room, and laid upon a sofa.

Here Mrs. Llewellyn ordered her own breakfast to be brought, and while it was being prepared she sat beside her victim, and upon the slightest sign of return of sensibility she administered her horrible drug.

When the servant brought in the breakfast, and respectfully asked if he could do anything for the sick young lady, she answered him in the negative, and dismissed him from the room.

She took her breakfast alone, and when it was finished, the horses, refreshed by a good feed, were put to the carriage, and Gladys, still in deep, death-like swoon, was carried back to her travelling prison.

When Gladys awoke again, they were whirling along a tortuous road, and the snow was falling thickly.

But she did not notice it. Sunshine or tempest was nothing to her.

She was faint from fatigue, and hunger, and despair. But she did not care. Life or death mattered little to her.

All day long they drove through the snow-storm. Late in the afternoon they reached a little mountain village.

As they drove into the principal street, Mrs. Llewellyn again seized and chloroformed her victim, now quite incapable of resistance.

They drove up to the best hotel, where Gladys was again lifted from the carriage and conveyed to a private room, where she lay insensible upon the sofa, while Mrs. Llewellyn got her own supper, and fresh horses were put to the carriage.

It was no part of this woman's design that her victim should perish of hunger; so she filled a bottle with coffee, and rolled up a parcel of sandwiches, and took them with her into the carriage.

Upon this occasion the swoon of Gladys continued so long as to excite serious apprehensions in the mind of the woman who had so criminally practised upon her health and reason.

But at length, when in the midst of that terrible fall of snow, they were slowly winding through a difficult part of the way, Gladys once more opened her eyes—how large, and hungry, and despairing they looked!

"You are famished," said her tormenter.

"Yes," sighed Gladys.

"Eat, then," said the other, placing the coffee and sandwiches before her.

"No; I will die," answered Gladys, wearily.

"As you please; but you will not die until you have served my purpose!" hissed the woman.

Then both relapsed into silence. And the carriage drove on through night and storm for an hour or two longer.

Suddenly it stopped.

"What is the matter?" called Mrs. Llewellyn from the window. Then, suddenly recollecting that her coachman could not hear, she tapped upon the front panel of the carriage until she produced a vibration that could be felt.

In another moment the deaf and dumb man was at the window.

"What is the matter?" she spelt rapidly upon her fingers by the light of the carriage lamp.

"If you please, ma'am, the road has become almost impassable. Had we not better put up at the tavern here for the night?" he spelt.

"Yes," she answered, briefly, on her fingers.

Again poor Gladys was chloroformed and taken into a private room of the rustic hotel, and this time she was undressed and put to bed.

Mrs. Llewellyn had a comfortable supper, so had

the coachman, but not Gladys; she, poor girl, remained in her artificially produced swoon for the greater portion of the night.

Mrs. Llewellyn sat beside her bed and watched her. She feared that she had gone too far in practising upon this poor girl's nerves and brain; but she feared still more, with a horrible and guilty dread, to call necessary assistance, lest it should lead to the discovery of her evil deeds. So she watched the pallid face of her victim with the utmost anxiety.

And when at length Gladys drew a faint fluttering breath and opened her eyes, Mrs. Llewellyn hastened to fill a feeding-cup with wine, and put the spout of it between the victim's lips, and compel her to swallow a little, before she should be sufficiently recovered to know what she was doing. Drugged wine it was, for as soon as Gladys had swallowed it she turned over and fell into a deep sleep, that was more natural than the swoon had been.

In the morning, as soon as it was light enough to see the road, Gladys was muffled up and conveyed to the carriage that was in readiness before the door.

And Mrs. Llewellyn resumed her journey.

This second day's travel was so much like the first that it need not be described. They stopped only twice, when it was absolutely necessary to change horses and to take refreshments. Gladys was always chloroformed before being taken from the carriage. And to sympathizing inquiries concerning the health of "the poor young lady," Mrs. Llewellyn answered that her young charge had only fainted from fatigue.

Always Mrs. Llewellyn, her coachman, and her horses got comfortable meals. And life was sustained in Gladys only by the administration of a few drops of wine at the point of time when she would be recovering from the effects of chloroform, and just capable of swallowing without being conscious of the act.

They rode through all the next night, and reached Cader Idris about ten o'clock on Tuesday morning.

Gladys, no longer unconscious, but too weak to resist or to talk, and almost to breathe, was lifted out of the carriage and conveyed to her own apartment, and laid upon her bed, just as she had been more than a year before. Only upon this occasion her deliverer and avenger was close in pursuit.

The darkest hour, you know, is always just before the dawn of day.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

A PROPER TOOL FOR VILLANY.

I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed, that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

And I another,
So weary with disasters,
That I would set my life on any chance
To mend it, or be rid on't.

Shakespeare.

I wish the good had half the energy of the wicked. If they had, I am sure that the victory of the right over the wrong would be more frequently won.

As soon as Mrs. Llewellyn had seen Gladys safely locked in her room, she went to her own chamber, changed her travelling-habit for a home dress, and then, without allowing herself one hour's repose after her harassing journey, she passed at once down-stairs to push forward the criminal purpose she had in view.

First she went into the small parlour—that was the common family sitting-room.

On opening the door she involuntarily started, and shrunk back in surprise and alarm at a piece of her own work that sat staring her in the face!

It was Mr. James Stukely, who was seated bolt upright upon the sofa, with his hands hanging down by his sides; his mouth open, his chin fallen, his eyes gazing into vacancy, his face pale as death, and his expression idiotic.

It was perfectly clear that he had been put through a course of Mrs. Llewellyn's sedatives, and that the treatment had gone unusually hard with him.

Mrs. Llewellyn looked at him for a minute, during which he never noticed her presence, or moved a muscle of his face or form.

"How do you do, James?" said his mother, at length, approaching him very cautiously.

"Extra—" began Mr. Stukely; but he did not finish the word, or change his position.

"James," said his mother, very emphatically, in order to arrest his attention—"James, I have had a very dangerous journey; but I have got home safe at last, and I have brought Gladys with me."

"Ah, in—" began Mr. Stukely; but he thought better of it, and stopped in the middle of the phrase.

"Oh, this fellow Nugent has gone beyond my orders! He has really poisoned the boy! He should have known that his poor brain could not bear much!" said Mrs. Llewellyn, indignantly, as she swept out of the parlour and passed into the library, where, after sharply ringing a bell, she threw herself into an easy-chair.

A servant soon answered the summons.

"Is Mr. Nugent in his room?"

"Yes, madam, he came in a few minutes ago."

"Let him know that I have returned home, and would like to see him here."

The servant bowed, and went to obey the order.

Before introducing this gentleman into the library, I must tell you who and what he was, and where and wherefore Mrs. Llewellyn had made his acquaintance, and invited him to her house.

About the time that Gladys fled there was a tremendous parochial and newspaper excitement over the case of a certain unworthy preacher, who, for gross impropriety of conduct, had been discharged by his congregation, and was awaiting the meeting of the proper authorities to investigate his case, and with every probability of being finally ungodly and dismissed. The public were divided in opinion as to his guilt or innocence; but not equally; by far the greater portion believed him guilty.

Mrs. Llewellyn had read all the paragraphs *pro* and *con*. And she believed the accused preacher to be guilty of the charges preferred against him. Perhaps, being of a kindred spirit, she understood him better than others did. She saw in him the very tool she needed to work out her designs against Gladys.

She wrote to him a letter, in which she declared her full belief that he was an innocent and injured man; and she invited and pressed him to call and see her, that she might express to him personally her sympathy and respect.

Refreshingly as rain upon the parched heath fell the words of this letter upon the desolate heart of the preacher, who, whether guilty or not guilty, most deeply felt the blasting tan breathed over him by society at large.

He lost no time in calling on Mrs. Llewellyn, who received him with all the tenderness of a loving mother, and all the veneration of a believing disciple.

She reiterated in his presence her earnest belief in his innocence, and promised all her social influence in his favour.

But be it noted that the social influence of Mrs. Llewellyn in London amounted to nothing, since she had sedulously avoided society, and had made no acquaintances whatever. And she invited him to dine with her the next day.

Delighted with his reception, he readily accepted the invitation, and the next day duly presented himself at the dinner hour.

Nor was that the last time he dined with his lady patroness. Mrs. Llewellyn, not doubting but that she should be able to recapture Gladys in due time, delayed her departure from London in order to cultivate Mr. Nugent. He dined with her a second and a third time.

And then, still treating him with an affection of sympathy and respect, she informed him of her intention soon to leave London.

He expressed the deepest regret at her intended departure.

She then remarked that London, could not, at the present time, be a very agreeable residence for himself.

He assured her that it was not, and that it would be much less so when she, his respected friend and beloved sister, should have departed.

And he spoke with an air as though he suspected the middle-aged widow had fallen in love with him, and was trying to draw him on to make a proposal, even if she did not intend to go farther and make one herself. But Mr. Nugent resolved to proceed cautiously.

He was a needy preacher, out of employment and in disgrace; but for all that he would not sacrifice himself to a middle-aged widow, unless he should be well assured that she was rich.

Vanity was not among the least of Mr. Nugent's natural endowments.

But no such thoughts were in the mind of the proud lady, far too proud, even if she had been younger, to have taken any man's yoke upon her, and especially this man's, upon whom she looked down with a private scorn and contempt, which, could he have felt and known, must have humbled his self-conceit to the dust.

She smothered her feelings of disgust, and speaking to him as an honourable woman to an honourable man, she invited him to accompany her to Cader Idris as her escort on her journey, and as her guest for the winter.

With a secret smile of gratified vanity, and with many outward expressions of thankfulness, he accepted this invitation.

And the next day the whole party set out for Cader Idris, and in three days they arrived there.

In a day or two after their arrival, the guest began to employ himself by trying to find out the financial circumstances of his hostess, and especially whether she was really the owner of the vast estate of Cader

Idris. If so, he resolved to lose not an hour in proposing to the widow, and securing a life interest in the property, when, of course, he could snap his fingers at the "congregation." Some little remnant of delicacy prevented him from making inquiries of her son. But on his first visit to the local post-office, he did not scruple to ask the postmaster. And then and there he received the information that Mrs. Llewellyn resided at Cader Idris only as the guardian of the heiress, and that in her own right she did not possess a shilling.

Nugent ground his teeth with disappointment and rage—rage at his hostess especially, whom in his heart he accused of trying to entrap him, by a show of wealth, into a marriage with herself. And he resolved "to pay her off," as he expressed it, by continuing to accept her hospitality and patronage, and enjoying all the comforts and luxuries of Cader Idris just as long and as fully as he possibly could, and then, when the crisis should come, by going off and breaking her heart.

But that very day he was destined to be undeceived as to his false suspicions, and enlightened as to the true state of the case.

That day Mrs. Llewellyn had determined that on search of Gladys, whom she felt certain she should the next morning she would set out for Scotland in find hiding at Ceres Cottage.

But even while she was making preparations for her departure, she received the morning mail, containing, among other parcels, the Scotch papers.

Glancing over these latter, her eyes happened to fall on the two advertisements, one under the other in the same column, that had been put in by poor Gladys.

Her face lighted up with fiendish triumph as she read them; for, of course, she recognized at once in the advertiser her deeply-wronged, fugitive ward. No other but Gladys would have advertised for Lieutenant Arthur Powis.

And, besides, the advertisement was signed with Gladys' own initials.

And the next advertisement for the situation of a governess was written in the same style and signed with the same initials; and therefore, of course, must have been put in by the same person, and that person was Gladys Powis.

Here, then, was a trap unconsciously set by the poor girl for herself.

All that Mrs. Llewellyn would have to do would be to put in the bait and pull the string, and the game would be secured.

In other words, she only need answer the advertisement for the situation of governess, by offering more liberal terms than it was possible any one else should offer; by forbearing to ask for references, as it was certain any one else would do; and by signing the letter with a fictitious name and appointing a place of meeting on the soil of Scotland, where Gladys, unable to prove her marriage in time, would drop legally into her guardian's power.

This plan, she knew, would save a world of scheming that she would have had to have gone through had Gladys remained with the old ladies at Ceres Cottage.

And before the day was out, she imparted enough of her plans to Mr. Nugent as would enable him to become her intelligent confederate.

She did not, however, admit him into her full confidence; for to do so would have been to confess herself to be an unprincipled wretch, and, by inference, to declare her belief that he himself was no better.

And refined villains do not go to work in that way. It is only your rude, unsophisticated, comparatively innocent rascals, these that plan the robbing of a bank or the murder of a traveller, who are perfectly honest with each other, and call things by their right names, and apply to acts their true motives.

Your refined and accomplished villains, on the contrary, keep up a thin show of honour and mutual respect, and pretend to deceive themselves and each other.

Thus Mrs. Llewellyn, knowing in her deepest consciousness that Nugent was an abominable wretch, who had deservedly been turned out of his charge by his congregation, and would soon be ungodly by his clerical brethren in council, still treated him as if she believed him to be an honourable man; yes, treated him so, even when telling him a story and making him a proposal that any intelligent man must immediately see through and any honest man repudiate in disgust.

She told him that her ward, Miss Llewellyn, had been betrothed by her parents to her son, Mr. Stukely; but that she was, alas, weak-minded almost to fatuity; that she had run off with a fortune-hunter, who had deserted her, and who had afterwards met his death by an accident; and that now she wished the marriage ceremony between her ward and her son to be very privately performed, as soon as she could get possession of the person of the unhappy girl, who was now, she

said, staying at a cheap, disreputable boarding-house in Scotland, from which she was going the next day to bring her. She further declared that her sole object was now the salvation of that wretched girl; but that the very nature of the circumstances rendered it necessary that some clergyman who was a confidential friend of the family should officiate. Finally, she hinted that the fee given to the officiating clergyman on the occasion of the marriage of an heir of the house of Llewellyn was never less than one hundred pounds, and that though she knew Mr. Nugent was entirely above such mercenary considerations, yet she begged his permission to state that, on the marriage of his sole heiress, the fee would be doubled.

At this the eyes of the false minister shone with a lurid lustre.

He knew in his heart that the woman who spoke to him was a devil, past the possibility of pardon, yet he answered her as though he considered her an angel of light.

He said that, of course, he knew she could only have the best welfare of her unhappy ward at heart; that he hoped the young lady, weak-minded as she might be, might still have sense enough to appreciate such devotion on the part of her guardian; that, for himself, he could not sufficiently admire such generosity and disinterestedness as he had the happiness to witness in his fair and honoured hostess and friend, who was thus willing to sacrifice the widow's only treasure, her sole son, to reclaim this erring girl. Finally, he assured her that he should feel bound by every tie of honour, admiration, and gratitude, to hold himself at her orders. And he misquoted Milton:

What thou command'st,

Unargued I obey.

Mrs. Llewellyn warmly thanked him, and they parted.

When Mrs. Llewellyn was alone, she smiled to herself as she thought: "He understands the whole thing. But I do not care, since he does not dare to show that he understands it; and, more than all, that he does not hesitate to sell me his aid; he does not, in fact, hesitate at anything which he thinks will bring a remunerative return."

When Mr. Nugent found himself alone he thought: "That woman is an unscrupulous wretch, who means to betray her helpless ward into a marriage with her imbecile son, so that she, herself, may enjoy the wealth of Cader Idris, and manage its vast revenues for the term of her natural life! For, of course, these two miserable young people, if the girl is as feeble-minded as the young man, will be but as babies in her hands. They will not even have a shilling of pocket-money that she will not dole out to them. And she wishes to use me as her tool to accomplish all this. Well, so long as she does not presume to unmask her villany to me, so long as she treats me as an honest man, and puts all her actions upon honourable grounds, and, above all, so long as she pays me well, I will serve her turn! And afterwards she shall serve my turn! For if there should be anything the least irregular in this marriage—as I am sure there will be, or she would never go to the trouble and expense of bringing me into the affair—I shall make known that its legality is very questionable indeed. And I shall thus have a hold upon Mrs. Llewellyn and the revenues of the Cader Idris estate that even she will not dare to deny."

Late that same evening Mrs. Llewellyn had another interview with her confederate. She told him that she wished to leave her house and household in his care during her necessary absence in Scotland. And she put a parcel of twelve small powders in his hands, and told him that they were the prescriptions of a celebrated physician of Scotland for her son, who was in a precarious state of health; but that the young man was so unreasonably opposed to taking whole medicines that she was obliged to drop one of these into his first cup of coffee in the morning, and into his first cup of tea in the evening. She further requested him to manage to be the first at the breakfast and at the tea-table, and to put one of these powders into her son's cup, and cover it with a little milk and sugar to hide it, so that he might take his wholesome physic without knowing it.

Nugent, though convinced that some deep villany lay concealed under the secret administration of these powders, yet promised all she wished.

The next day Mrs. Llewellyn set out for Scotland, to post that lying letter which had deceived poor Gladys into her power.

And on the appointed day she went in her new carriage and pair to meet her and entrap her, as we have seen.

She had now again her victim in her possession. And her plans were all once more arranged for action.

And she was sitting in the library awaiting the entrance of that willing tool who was to ensure her success.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

THE FORTUNATE THIRD TRIAL.

Never give up! It is wiser and better
Always to hope than once to despair;
Fling off the load of doubt's cankering fetter,
And break the dark spell of tyrannical care.
Never give up! or the burden may sink you,
Providence wisely has mingled the cup;
And in all trials and troubles bethink you,
The watchword of life should be—Never give up!

M. F. Tupper.

It is certain that if a bad man were always labelled "villain" by physiognomy, his career in crime would be cut short, or, perhaps, it would never even be begun.

But, unfortunately, this is not generally so. At some former period in the history of the human race, characters and countenances may have been in harmony; but not now.

It is likely a man may inherit his features from one ancestor and his disposition from another; and these two may have been as opposite in their natures as light and darkness.

One of the most kindly, happy, and charming-looking portraits we ever saw was that of a "gentleman" who had been convicted and executed for poisoning several of his dearest friends and nearest relatives.

And one of the most diabolical-looking physiognomies that ever chilled the blood in the veins of the beholder was that of an antique bust on exhibition at the Crystal Palace, and labelled—Tiberius the Good!

After that we ceased to judge of character by countenances.

There was certainly nothing to repel confidence or arouse suspicion in the fair face and blue eyes of the graceful young man who answered Mr. Llewellyn's summons to the library.

"Sit down, Mr. Nugent," said the lady.

The young man bowed and complied.

"You expected me home to-day?"

"I scarcely knew whether to expect you. I feared that you would be detained by the snow-storm."

"But, you see, I have not been. And I hope there has been no delay on your part."

"Oh, no, madam; everything that has been left to my charge is quite ready."

"You have the license?"

The young man took the document from his pocket and put it in her hands.

"Quite right. I hope you remembered to invite the vicar to the ceremony on the estate."

"Yes, madam."

"I consider it necessary that they should attend; for, though I see that you have taken care to get out a special license for this marriage, still I choose that it shall be solemnized as publicly as it can be done in a private house, lest any carper should in future take exceptions to the ceremony as having been too privately performed."

Mr. Nugent bowed his acquiescence to the prudence of these measures.

"And now about my son, the bridegroom elect. What have you been doing to him to reduce him to the state in which I find him?" asked the lady, very gravely.

"I have simply given him the powders according to your direction."

"What! have you given him no more than two a-day?"

"No more than that, madam. And if you will recollect how many powders you gave me, and how many days you have been absent, you will see that I could not have given him more."

"True. It was I who miscalculated his strength. And now, Mr. Nugent, I believe that is all I have to say to you at present. In a short time I will reward your zeal," said the lady, terminating the interview.

At a very early hour the tenants and dependents of the Llewellyn estates, dressed in their holiday attire, began to assemble at Cader Idria. Full of wonder were they at the honour that had been done them, and full of conjecture as to the reason why the marriage had been fixed, by special license, to take place at such an unusual hour; but so that they saw the show in the drawing-room, and partook of the feast that had been prepared for them in the dining-room, they troubled themselves but little about the motives and actions of their betters.

When all was ready below stairs—when every room was brilliantly lighted up, and every window dazzlingly illuminated, when the humble wedding guests were crowded, not sitting, but standing along the walls of the drawing-room, leaving a way clear for the entrance of the wedding party—then Mrs. Llewellyn went up into the chamber where Gladys still lay like a beautiful automaton on her bed.

Unconscious, the woman lifted the light, flexible form of the helpless girl and placed her on a chair, and

then proceeded to dress her, for the third time, in wedding clothes. Rather awkwardly and clumsily she did this; but then Mrs. Llewellyn cared very little whether her pale and almost lifeless young victim were well or ill-dressed, so that she was safely married.

When she had finished this miserable toilet, to the last acts of putting the crushed wreath on the head, and arranging the crumpled veil over the form of Gladys, Mrs. Llewellyn laid her back in her chair, and went to look for her son.

She found Mr. Stukely seated in an easy-chair before the fire in his own room.

He had forgotten all about his toilet.

And it was now too late to make any considerable change in it. Something, however, must be done.

"James Stukely!" shouted his mother in his ear, as she shook him roughly, and put his dress coat in his hand, "get up, and put on this."

"Extraordi—" began the young gentleman, as he mechanically arose and obeyed.

"And now put on these."

"Ah, ind—" commenced Mr. Stukely, drawing on the white kid gloves that she gave him.

"And now come with me," she said, taking his arm.

"All ri—" began Mr. Stukely, but he forgot to finish his sentence.

Mrs. Llewellyn led him to the room where Gladys with her benumbed senses, still sat reclining in her chair.

"Come here, take one of your cousin's arms, and help me to lead her down-stairs."

"Just s—" began Mr. Stukely; but he seemed fated never to finish even one of his own short sentences.

And Gladys, with her face entirely concealed by the bridal-veil that had been drawn over it, was lifted to her feet by the united efforts of Mrs. Llewellyn and Mr. Stukely, and led and guided between them down the stairs, and through the hall, and into the crowded drawing-room, where all the humble wedding-guests stood around against the walls in eager expectation, and where the officiating clergyman stood in the centre of the room in readiness.

On the entrance of the bridal party, a buzz of comment went through the assembly.

"Good gracious! how weak she seems! more dead than alive!" was, in better or worse language, the burden of these comments; until at length Mr. Nugent lifted his hand, in a peremptory manner, as a signal for silence, and the murmuring ceased, while Gladys, supported between Mr. Stukely and Mrs. Llewellyn, was led up and stood before the minister.

In the midst of a breathless silence, that was only occasionally interrupted by the entrance of a late guest, the ceremony commenced.

First was read the solemn preliminary exhortation, to which Mr. Stukely began to respond:

"Extra—" But, as usual, broke down before he finished the word.

This response, however, seemed to be considered quite regular by the obliging minister, who immediately passed on to the important question, addressed to the bridegroom:

"James—Wilt thou take this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of matrimony?"

To this Mr. Stukely promptly answered:

"Ah, ind—" and then stopped and stared in dumb dismay at the door, through which some new guests seemed to be entering.

But this fragmentary answer also seemed quite satisfactory to the complaisant clergyman, who was proceeding to put a similar question to the bride, when suddenly the book was sent flying from his paralyzed hand, the bridegroom was hurled spinning into the midst of the astounded crowd, and Gladys was caught fainting to the sheltering bosom of Arthur Powis, who, like an avenging spirit, stood among them.

(To be continued.)

DOES ICE SINK?—What becomes of this ice? Had one lain in weight for it two hundred miles further south, it is doubtful if he would have seen of it even a vestige. It cannot melt away so quickly; a day amidst it satisfies any one of us so much. Whither does it go? Put that question to a sealer or fisherman, and he will answer, "it sinks." "But," replies that cheerful and confident gentleman, Mr. Current Impression, "ice does not sink; ice floats." Grave science, too, says the same. I believe that ignorance is right for once. You are becalmed in the midst of floating ice, the current bears you and it together, but next morning the ice has vanished! You rub your eyes, but the fact is not one to be rubbed out; the ice was, and isn't there! No evidence exists that it can fly like riches, therefore, I

think it sinks. I have seen it, too, not indeed in the very act of sinking, but so water-logged as barely to keep its nose out. A block four cubic feet in dimension lay, at a subsequent time, beside the ship, and there was not a portion bigger than a child's fist above water. Watching it again, when it has been tolerably well sweltered, you will see air-bubbles incessantly escaping. Evidently, the air which it contains is giving place to water. Now, it is this air, I judge, which keeps it afloat, and when the process of displacement has sufficiently gone on, what can it do but sink? This reasoning may be wrong, but the fact remains. The reasoning is chiefly a guess; yet, till otherwise informed, I shall say, the ice-langs gets full of water, and it goes down.—"Ice and Esquimaux."

THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN EMPLOYED IN TRADE.

TWENTY years ago, a commission was appointed to inquire into the moral and physical conditions of young women and children employed in various trades. The investigation brought to light a mass of misery and degradation amongst the operative population of the country, and the too common prevalence of iniquitous trade customs, of which the young and helpless were the chief victims, and which called for the imperative interference of the legislature.

In 1862 it was thought advisable to appoint a second commission to carry out a similar investigation. The first report of this commission was published in the course of 1863; the second and third reports have just issued from the press. The first report details the investigations of the commissioners on the employment of young people in the pottery, lucifer-match, percussion-cap, paper-staining, lace, and hosiery manufactures; also on the occupation of finishers, hookers, and fustian-cutters. The second report contains further investigations concerning the lace and hosiery manufactures; also inquiries into the condition of dress-makers, mantle-makers, and milliners, seamstresses, shirt-makers, and boot-makers. The third report is devoted to the metal manufactures of South Staffordshire and the adjoining districts.

It is impossible to speak too highly of the conscientious care with which evidence has been collected by the commissioners. Their reports present singularly graphic accounts of the conditions under which some of the more extended and important trades in the kingdom are pursued, and of the moral and physical state of the young people engaged in them. No subject can be of deeper interest to the community. It touches narrowly the very core of the nation's prosperity—the physical and moral vigour of its young population.

Much has been done to ameliorate the condition of children and women operatives since the commission of 1842; but, alas! very much still remains to be done. A knowledge of the ills to be overcome is half the remedy, so to speak, and this knowledge the reports of the commission, so far as published, fully afford us.

The commissioners have still to investigate the paper, glass, tobacco, and ribbon manufactures, brick-making, and certain miscellaneous trades of the metropolis, and in other parts of the kingdom.

Of most immediate interest among the reports is the inquiry into the state of milliners and dressmakers. To this important subject we shall devote especial attention.

FEARFUL ENCOUNTER WITH A TIGER.—One day last week, a royal tiger having made its appearance close to the village of Puggydial, in the Kurnool district, while Colonel Cotton was inspecting the distribution channels in the Nagalore division, the colonel, accompanied by Mr. Cotton and his two assistants, Mr. Johnston and Mr. Charles Cotton, advanced upon the beast. Mr. W. Cotton fired one shot, which took effect, when the tiger ran off. The natives, who had assembled in force, dispersed in pursuit; but Mr. Cotton's party, now left alone, soon after saw some people running through a cholera field in alarm, some of whom climbed up a stack of newly-cut corn, where they were assailed by the tiger, and two of them pulled down. Mr. Cotton and his two companions immediately went to the rescue, and Mr. Cotton attempted to fire, but his rifle missing fire, the tiger sprang upon Mr. Johnston, who had also fired a shot, and, seizing him by the back, wounded him fearfully. Mr. Cotton then attacked the tiger with the butt end of his gun, until it broke, and the tiger, leaving Mr. Johnston, seized Mr. Cotton by the arm, snapping it, and inflicting some grievous wounds. Mr. Charles Cotton, a youth, recently arrived from England, then advanced with a revolver, and while the tiger held his brother by the arm, lodged five balls in the animal's head, which enabled the two sufferers to get away. The tiger crept into the stack of cholera, from which he was soon after brought out dead. Mr. William

Cotton was carried into Kurnool, a distance of about twenty-five miles, where he was attended by Dr. Kees, who found both bones broken a little below the elbow, and several deep wounds inflicted by the tiger's teeth. Until these are in a better state the arm cannot be fully set; but by the last accounts (27th ult.) the patient was doing well. Mr. Johnston, whose wounds it is feared are of a more dangerous character, was unable to be moved. Of the two natives, one had been brought into Kurnool in a better state than was anticipated; the other was on his way. The first two balls from the revolver penetrated the skull. Mr. Charles Cotton then fired the remaining three into the tiger's mouth, which induced him to loose his hold, and made him reel back.—*Madras Times*, December 2.

LADY VENETIA.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Accursed be the day when first I saw
The light which sparkles in your traitorous eyes.

Dante.

AFTER descending, Baldoni had fully unveiled his lantern, and the broad glare faintly lighted the vast space that spread around; Pepita said:

"I see nothing worth looking at, so let us hurry on to our destination. My soul pants to enter the enchanted regions of the treasure chamber, and make myself mistress of its contents. We have traced the route too accurately to miss it, so let us move on without delay."

"You seem very confident in your knowledge. Could you find the entrance alone, do you think?"

"Assuredly. It is in the eastern wall, with a notch cut above it in the rock. But you have been here before this, and ascertained where it is to be found; while I should lose time in threading my way among the casks."

"I rather think you would," he drily remarked; and for the next few moments he wound his way circuitously to the farthest extremity of the vault, a small portion only of which had been used as a receptacle for wine.

Its dimensions gradually narrowed till the walls barely permitted the passage of one person.

This extended about twelve feet, and then appeared to come to an abrupt termination. The massive wall seemed to bar further progress, but the rapid eyes of Pepita instantly detected a cleft in the rock a few feet above the floor, which corresponded to the one drawn on the diagram. She pointed it out to her father, and watched curiously by what means it was to be unclosed.

Baldoni gave her the lantern, bidding her hold it so as to throw its full light upon the spot indicated; he then knelt down, and pressed heavily upon the wall, two feet above the floor. In a few seconds a square block of stone sunk down, leaving an opening about three feet in diameter. Through this narrow aperture Baldoni forced his person, and taking the lantern on the other side, placed it on a ledge of rock, while he assisted his daughter to drag herself and her drapery through the opening.

She laughed as she gained her feet, and said:

"This dress will never be fit to appear in again, but that does not matter. What we are in search of must be well worth seeking, if one is to judge of its value from the precautions taken to conceal it. Shall we close the trap, or leave it open till we return?"

"Leave it as it is. No one will be likely to follow us. Come on, for we have a long and rough walk before us, if, as I judge, the place we seek is under La Tempesta."

Pepita followed him in silence. Even her dauntless spirit, somewhat overawed by the gloom and silence that surrounded them in the tortuous passage through which their route lay.

The avenue was scarcely four feet wide, and barely high enough to permit a tall man to pass through it. The rocky formation gradually ceased, and then they found themselves winding through a succession of brick arches, which seemed to have suffered little from the late convulsion.

Baldoni threw the light of the lantern upon the walls, and said:

"The cement with which these bricks is held together, has hardened till it is as immovable as granite. It is lucky that such is the case, or our quest might have been effectually ended before this."

"We cannot be far from the place now," said Pepita, anxiously. "We have walked a long distance."

"No! so you're tired, then. I told you how it would be, but you would not listen to me. You had much better have stayed at home till I explored the ground."

"Tired!" she disdainfully repeated. "I am only anxious and excited. When I am seeking that which is to give me the triumph my ambition pants to attain,

it is not likely that I shall complain of anything. The cowardly only fail, and I do not know what fear is," was her composed reply.

And they again went on.

In a few more moments the avenue made an abrupt angle, and a pile of brickwork lay in their path, completely blocking up the way. The two paused simultaneously, and regarded each other with looks of apprehensive dismay.

Baldoni hoarsely said:

"The fears I had just began to dismiss are realized; the earthquake has choked up the passage before us."

"There is but one thing to be done," replied Pepita, resolutely. "We must remove the fragments, and pass on to the place we seek."

"It may be that we shall find it impossible to do so, and thus heaven will save us from the crime we were about to commit. We had better return, and give up all thought of robbing our master."

A flash of rage and determination came into the eyes of the girl, and she passionately said:

"What! return with our errand unaccomplished? I will work my fingers to the bone in removing these obstructions before I will be guilty of such craven want of spirit as that. Give me the candles, that I may light them and examine the place."

"As you will; but it will be best to go back."

She looked him full in the face as she disdainfully said:

"I will not shrink back, and leave you to return alone and penetrate to the treasure which belongs as much to me as to you. Come, I will assist you to force a passage, and two can work better than one."

While speaking, she snatched the candles, and lighting several of them, sought niches in the broken wall in which to place them.

Baldoni, with something of an engineer's skill, examined the formidable mass of rubbish before them, and dubiously shook his head.

Pepita imperiously said:

"Give me the chart, that I may see how near we are to the opening in the chamber."

Her father silently offered her the paper. She held it near the light an instant, and then exclaimed:

"I counted the arches as we came along, and this is the last of them. When we remove these obstructions, we shall find ourselves at the entrance of the treasure-chamber. Look! see for yourself that I am right."

Baldoni glanced at the diagram, and seemed to recover his courage.

He briefly said:

"Let us work with a will, then, while there is time; for daylight may be on us before we can complete the job."

Pepita, regardless of her hands, seized on the broken bricks, and hurled them aside even more rapidly than her father could.

Both laboured with desperate energy, and their efforts were soon rewarded by a glimpse of a rocky wall beyond them.

They both knew that the valley which lay between the castle and La Tempesta had been perforated by the passage through which they had just passed, and the vaults they now were in sight of must be immediately below the chapel.

This certainty nerved them to new efforts; and, after an hour of excessive labour, an opening was made sufficiently large to enable them to pass the obstructions.

Baldoni paused to take breath, and then said:

"The last arch must have been imperfectly cemented to the rocks beyond, and thus the late shock had power to crumble it into ruins. I am quite exhausted with this unusual labour, and I wish we had brought with us some of the wine from the vault. It was very stupid in me not to provide for such a contingency as this."

"I should like the wine, too; but we can do very well without it. I see from here a cleft in the rock similar to the one we left behind us, so let us press on. There is nothing now between us and wealth that can give me all I panted to possess; wealth that can lift me to any position I may be ambitious to attain."

There was a tone of wild exultation in her voice, which caused her father to turn his eyes upon her flushed face. It was radiant with triumph, and she seemed to have no thought for her torn and bleeding hands, scarcely to be conscious that they were injured.

Baldoni pointed to them, and asked, with some apprehension:

"How will you account for those wounds to Lettorio to-morrow? She is so inquisitive that she will be sure to ask how your hands came to be in such a condition."

"Oh! leave that for after consideration," she feverishly replied. "We cannot pause now to concoct a story for Lettorio's satisfaction. I have invention

enough to account for anything when the time comes. Open—open, and let us pass to the realization of our magnificent dreams."

Thus impetuously urged, Baldoni caught some of her impatience. He moved cautiously forward, and knelt down in front of the wall.

The entrance was exactly similar to that through which they had already passed; and after a few seconds of heavy pressure, the pivot turned, and the way was open before him.

Without pausing to look on his daughter, Baldoni passed through, rapidly followed by Pepita, and the two found themselves in a small, irregular chamber, in the walls of which cavities were hewed to hold the treasure they sought.

Pepita, with trembling eagerness, lighted the remaining candles, that the whole place might be illuminated.

The gleam of gold in one coffer, and of jewels in another, excited her to such a pitch that she dashed, clapped her hands, and at last fairly shrieked with joy.

"Oh, it is magnificent! it is grand! Here are the hoards of the dead and gone Colonas entirely at our disposal; and I, at least, have no scruple as to appropriating them. How much do you think those jewels are worth? See—there are diamonds of rare lustre, rubies and emeralds of almost equal beauty. It seems a shame to bury such beautiful things in the earth."

"I dare say you think they would be doing better service if decking your handsome person, Pepita," said the father, drily. "Have patience, and perhaps some of them may have that honour yet."

"Perhaps! Indeed, there is no doubt about that. Rubies suit my style, and, for a change, the emeralds mingled with some of those exquisite pearls, will become me very well. Of course, I shall take as many of them as I choose."

"Softly—softly, girl; we must not strip the coffers quite bare, for every heir of Colonna knows that in the treasure chamber jewels as well as gold are to be found."

"Do you expect Vittorio ever to come here to claim any of this wealth?" she asked, in surprise.

"Certainly. He is aware of the existence of this chamber, and he would be sure to seek it, even if the clue to it were lost. The new marquis already knows that his father left such directions in the casket, as will enable him to find the place, and it is my purpose to make him believe that I rescued them at the risk of my own life."

"It would have been far better to let him think that they were lost," she abruptly said. "Everything in the room of the old marquis was crushed; then why not take all we find here, and leave the heir to find his own way to the place, if he can?"

"Because he would be sure to do so, and then I should be suspected, and probably ruined. No, no, Pepita; my course is the best for safety. The gold here is less than I expected to find. There are but two coffers filled with it, and I thought there would be a much larger amount."

"Less! How much more would you ask? How many thousands do you suppose are here in gold alone?"

"Something more than a million of scudi, perhaps."

She uttered a cry.

"As much as that? Why, our fortune is made with the half of it."

"And that is precisely what I shall venture to remove. Of the gems that are unset, you make take enough to make yourself a *parure* of each, which will render you the envy of every lady in the land, when the time arrives for you to wear them."

Pepita again drew near the jewel coffer. She lifted from it a collar studded with pearls and diamonds, with a brilliant star pendant from it.

"How I wish I dared appropriate this; it dazzles my eyes to look on it."

"That is a sacred family relic, and must remain where it is. It is the insignia of some order bestowed on the great-grandfather of the present marquis by the Emperor Charles V., for services rendered him in his struggle with Francis I. He was a grand seigneur, and when he appeared at the Spanish court, no other noble surpassed him in the splendour of his appointments."

A smile gleamed on her full lips.

"I must leave them, then; but I will yet make Vittorio give me this star to be made into an ornament for my ebony tresses. It would glitter finely among them."

"Your power over him will never compass that. Noble families too highly prize such distinctions as that bauble indicates to permit a jewel to be removed from it. It would be unreasonable in you to ask it."

"I do not expect to be reasonable when I am Marchioness of Colonna. When I have once been accepted as Vittorio's wife, every caprice shall be

gratified, and he will soon find that I am mistress of him and all he possesses."

Her father laughed, for at that instant she looked so handsome that he believed she could accomplish her audacious boast, in spite of the obstacles that lay in her path.

Pepita soon busied herself in selecting such gems as she fancied, and transferring them to the pockets she wore beneath her dress, while her father filled with gold two small canvas bags he had brought with him for that purpose. He said:

"This is as much as I can take with me to-night; but I shall return as often as is necessary, until I have removed as much of the treasure as I dare appropriate. There is no need that you shall venture here again, Pepita, so you had better take such jewels as you fancy at once."

"Thank you. I have already done so. But we are not going back yet. There must be at least two hours to daylight, and I have a fancy that there must be some way of getting from this room into the chapel. If it should prove so, it will be much easier to come thither by that route after the funeral of the marquis is over."

Baldoni seemed struck with this suggestion, and he thoughtfully said:

"That is true; there is a tradition that the chapel has vaults beneath it, though Father Boniface has often assured me that he is not aware of their existence. We can, at least, examine these walls and ascertain if there is any mode of egress in that direction."

Pepita lifted the lantern from the rocky projection on which it had been placed, and slowly walked around the narrow space, followed by her father, both regarding the rough walls with the keenest scrutiny.

Suddenly Pepita knelt down, and eagerly pointed to a cleft in the rock, more faintly cut, but decidedly like those which had guided them to the previous openings. She exclaimed:

"There! there! I told you so! We shall penetrate to the chapel through here."

Again Baldoni applied his strength below the sign, and, after a few moments of uncertainty, the spring performed its duty, and a square of stone slowly descended, leaving a dark, yawning space open before them.

Uncertain to what it might lead, he first thrust the lantern on the other side, and seeing that an open space lay beyond, he passed through, quickly followed by Pepita.

When he raised the light and looked around, he saw that they were standing in an oblong apartment, at least twenty feet in length and twelve feet wide. Passing to its farther extremity, a door was found, which opened into a kind of vestibule, from which a flight of steps descended.

At the foot of these a second door hung loosely on its hinges, and a little examination showed Baldoni that it was made to fit so accurately in the wall that no one unacquainted with its locality would be likely to find it.

There was no furniture of any kind to carry out the first thought of the steward—that the place had been used as a prison—but the remains of broken casks proved that these vaults had also been used as wine cellars. When they stood at the foot of the stairs, the steward asked:

"Shall we stop here or go on, Pepita?"

"Go on, of course, and see to what these will lead. I thought you wished to find an outlet in the chapel?"

"Perhaps it may be dangerous to seek one now," he said; but he commenced mounting the stairs, in obedience to her wishes.

Pepita closely followed him, counting the steps as she went up.

They had ascended fifty, when the muffled sounds of music confirmed their conjectures, and Pepita hurriedly said:

"We are under the chapel floor. Hark! they are performing morning mass for the marquis. I did not think daylight was so near; we had better make our retreat while we can."

"It cannot be more than three o'clock, and it will not be fairly daylight for an hour yet. I must go a little higher, but I will soon return."

Pepita would not consent to be left behind, and the two quickened their steps, every moment the deep vibrations of the music becoming more distinct; and the two almost suppressed their breathing as they drew near the level of the chapel.

The steps wound upward in a spiral direction till they terminated abruptly in a square pillar, which Baldoni instantly recognized as forming one of the supports of the altar.

This, then, was the point of egress, and he looked eagerly up and down the hollow space, which was sufficiently wide for a man to thrust his head and shoulders through. His search was rewarded in an

unexpected manner. As he raised his hand above his head, and moved it cautiously over the surface, it came suddenly in contact with a rusted key, which had evidently been long in the lock, for it required some effort to move it.

Bending down, he hurriedly whispered his discovery to Pepita, and added:

"Stand below, and carefully shade the lantern, while I see if this will serve me in future."

She quickly obeyed him, and availing himself of the sudden increase in the volume of sound that filled the chapel from a finely-toned organ, Baldoni gave the key a wrench, which caused it to turn with a slight snap.

Pausing a moment before venturing further, he gathered courage to push the door. It yielded slowly, and a crevice was cautiously opened, which showed him that the door formed the lower side of the pillar on the left hand side of the altar. From the spot on which he stood, the steward had an imperfect view of the tier of the dead nobleman, with the officiating priest, and a few of the worshippers who had come at that early hour to participate in the morning services.

Closing the aperture softly, Baldoni turned the key, and gently withdrew it from the lock. He then joined his daughter, informed her of the discovery he had made, and together they retreated by the way they had come, carefully closing all the openings behind them.

As they passed the fallen arch, Baldoni said:

"When I have taken away as much of the treasure as I can venture to remove, I shall replace these as we found them; for by this avenue alone shall the young marquis reach the chamber."

"Why not bring him through the chapel? It will be much the shortest and easiest way to get there."

"That may be; but I have another use for those vaults, and their existence must be concealed from every one but you and myself."

Pepita regarded his sombre brow, and marvelled what possible use he could have for these subterranean chambers.

When they issued from the wine cellar, a faint, rosy streak was visible in the east, and they hurried along the broken pathway, apprehensive that some early straggler might be encountered. They were so fortunate, however, as to reach the cottage without detection, and the loud breathing of Lettorio, as they passed her room, assured the nocturnal wanderers that they were safe from her espionage.

Pepita was too much excited by the adventures of the night to feel fatigue. She followed her father to his room, and said:

"Show me the key you brought away. It was strange that it should have been left in the lock."

"I think it possible that the late marquis took his eldest son through by that route, and returned by the subterranean passage. The key was evidently forgotten; for it must have been in the lock many years from its rusted condition. If it had been differently shaped, I think the wrench I gave it must have broken its wards."

While speaking, he drew from his pocket a cube of steel exactly similar to the one used to open the casket, but of larger size. It was much rusted, but Pepita assured him that by using a preparation in her possession, she could easily remove the stains, and prevent it from grating in the lock.

"You had better be thinking of the condition of your hands," he replied. "I think your invention will be taxed to account for their appearance."

"Oh, I shall wrap them up, and say that I have scalded them. My flesh heals easily, and in a few days they will be quite well again."

"I advise you to go to bed at once, and feign illness, for you will need repose after this night's work. As to myself, I must snatch a few hours of sleep, and then seek some safe means of disposing of the wealth I have so suddenly acquired."

"Make my share secure, at all events," was her reply, as she left the room to follow his advice.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Whence do ye go, with looks so full of thought?

Be pleased, in courtesy, to tell me whither?

From the Italian.

On the day after the visit of the steward to the treasure chamber, the funeral of the marquis took place. The burial vault was situated beneath the altar of the chapel, and when Baldoni entered it he curiously examined the walls, to ascertain if he could find any communication existed between this receptacle for the dead and the subterranean apartments he had discovered on the previous night.

He could perceive no evidence of any, and he breathed a sigh of relief, while his brow gathered into a darker and more ominous expression as he medi-

tated on the use to which his discovery might be put.

The peasantry on the estate gathered to pay the last respect due to their deceased landlord, and several proprietors from a distance came to share in the last rites celebrated in memory of a man who had been universally respected.

Among the crowd nearest the altar stood a dark-robed woman, nearly supporting the delicate form of a pale girl, who looked unfit to appear in such a scene. Lucia had insisted that she must attend the obsequies of the marquis, and believing that the refusal of her earnest prayer would injure her more than the effort to attend, the nun permitted her to come.

Learning her intention, Baldoni sent down a small open carriage from the castle, with the request that she would use it, as he knew her to be still too weak to walk as far as the chapel. Lucia had no scruples about accepting this courtesy, and both she and Sister Maria came over in it.

While the imposing ceremonies of the Catholic ritual were performed, Baldoni scarcely removed his eyes from the bowed face of the young girl, who, he felt assured, held his fate in her hands; and at intervals a strange shiver passed through the frame of Lucia, as she felt the power of the magnetic glance which was so malevolently fixed upon her.

Baldoni had not been able to gain an interview with Lucia since her removal to the cottage of Guseppe, though he had made many efforts to do so. She steadily refused to receive him, and he could not force his way into her presence, though he asserted that he had something of importance to communicate to her. Sister Maria insisted that she was not strong enough to attend to business of any kind.

Mingled with the sinister expression of his sallow face were occasional gleams of passionate admiration, elicited by the beauty her illness seemed only to have heightened. He thought:

"If I can only win her to be my own, I shall be the happiest of men. But if she refuses all my proffers, then I will have no mercy on her!" and his face assumed its hardest and most repulsive expression.

That subtle attraction which at times impels one to look toward a person who is intently regarding them, at length acted on Lucia, and at the most inopportune moment for Baldoni, she raised her head and her eyes met his.

The feverish glow excitement had called to her cheek faded to a deathly paleness, and he marked the shudder that convulsed her frame as she turned her face away, and closed her eyes as if to shut out the very consciousness of his presence near her.

If Baldoni had before doubted her knowledge of his secret, he was now convinced that it was in her possession; and he dug his nails in his hands with the vicious feeling of a rabid animal at bay.

The services were at length ended, and the procession formed, bearing the coffin of the marquis to its sombre resting-place.

Lucia, supported by the nun, walked next to the corpse, followed by the steward and his daughter, as chief mourners.

Many coffins, covered with armorial decorations, already occupied the vault, and a place was found for that of the marquis between those of his two wives, while his lately deceased son lay at their feet.

When the eyes of Pepita fell on the name of Count Angostino, she changed colour slightly, and a meaning glance passed between herself and her father; but there was nothing like regret or remorse in its expression.

Her hands were carefully gloved, that the excoiations lately inflicted on them might not be observed by others; and the old woman who acted as cook and housekeeper at the cottage, was quite satisfied that they had been burned in some of Pepita's experiments in concocting cosmetics, in which she was quite an adept.

The last note from the organ died away, the chanting ceased, and the vault closed upon the mortal remains of the Marquis of Colonna.

Lucia and her companion lingered after the crowd had dispersed, and Baldoni drew near them with a respectful bow.

"You will use the carriage on your return, Lucia. You seem quite exhausted by the long ceremonies in which you have taken part."

The young girl controlled her features as well as she could, and courteously replied:

"Thank you for your consideration in sending it to me. I wish to have a few moments' conversation with Father Boniface, and then I shall go away. The carriage shall be returned in safety."

She did not look directly at him as she spoke, or she must have noted the expression of intense apprehension that swept over his face.

His natural sallowness deepened to a ghastly yellow, and, after a great effort to control his voice, he quietly said:

"Will it not be best to defer your confession to another day? You will quite exhaust your strength if you attempt it now."

"I am not going to confession; I merely wish to ask the blessing of the good father before I leave this neighbourhood. He is too infirm to come to me, and this may be my only opportunity to bid him farewell."

"Do you go so soon?" he compelled himself to ask.

"To-morrow I shall leave with Sister Maria. She has kindly undertaken to find a home for me with a friend of hers till she can get possession of her own house, which is far distant from this place."

Her manner was natural and composed, and Baldoni began to doubt whether his own fears had not deceived him.

Pepita now drew near, and coolly offered her congratulations to Lucia on her recovery.

She said:

"Your ungracious refusal of our hospitality did not prevent me from sending you such things as I was sure you must need. I hope you found the fruit and wine acceptable?"

With wonderful self-command, Lucia replied:

"Certainly; they could not be otherwise to one suffering from fever. I am much obliged to you, Pepita, and Sister Maria will assure you that we made good use of your presents."

Some feeling she did not understand compelled her to utter this equivocal.

Pepita's inquisitive eyes scanned her features, and she sceptically said:

"If you drank the wine, you should have improved more rapidly; you look as weak as a kitten, and your colour is changing every moment. I am afraid that your friend made better use of them than you did."

"Yes. She helped me to dispose of them, for I could never have used the half of what you sent."

The face of the nun was concealed by a black hood, which shrouded her features. She did not attempt to take part in the conversation, but she made a gesture of warning to Lucia, which did not escape the quick eyes of Pepita.

She took her father's arm, and said:

"We are detaining Lucia from Father Boniface, and she should not remain out of her bed much longer. Let us go."

"Directly," said Baldoni.

Then turning towards Lucia, he said:

"Since it is your purpose to leave to-morrow, you will not refuse to see me a few moments on business of importance before you go. Will you receive me this afternoon?"

With an appearance of reluctance she could not conceal, in spite of her efforts to do so, Lucia replied:

"If you must see me, I suppose this afternoon will answer as well as any other time."

"I may call then?"

"Certainly—at any hour that will be convenient for yourself."

The father and daughter bowed, and left her to seek the priest in the rear building attached to the chapel, in which his apartments were situated.

No sooner were they beyond hearing than Pepita vehemently spoke:

"We are in mortal danger from that girl. She knows all, I am convinced, and she is only on her guard till she can find means to communicate with Vittorio. She has not touched the articles I sent her, or she could never have left her bed to-day. I took good care to drug them with a slow, consuming poison, which must have acted fatally on her weakened system."

"How dared you attempt such a thing?" exclaimed her father. "I shall make all safe with Lucia yet, for she has no alternative except becoming my wife or going on the stage."

"Ah, bah!" was the contemptuous response; "why will you cling to that absurd idea? She will die sooner than marry you, and the sooner she is safe in her grave the better for you and me. How do you know that she has not already written an account of what she saw on the day of the earthquake, and seeks Father Boniface to have her letter safely forwarded to Vittorio?"

Baldoni calmly replied:

"She will not do that, for the young marquis is travelling with his bride, and the mails are too uncertain to trust so important a revelation to its keeping. No; Lucia thinks now that she will await Vittorio's return, that she may have an excuse for seeking him again. She hopes to crush me; but before that time I shall have her so completely in my power that I shall have nothing to fear from her."

"I do not understand how that is to be achieved," was the impatient reply. "Lucia is evidently on her guard, and this woman who has taken charge of her will be on the alert to protect her from harm of any kind."

"A sly fox is not easily baffled," he evasively

replied. "Let it suffice that I will protect your interests and my own at all hazards. With this assurance you must rest satisfied."

Their walk home from the chapel led them by the cottage of Guiseppe, and as they approached it Pepita examined the localities. The house stood on a slight elevation, and behind the little garden attached to it was a ravine, which had been deepened by the late catastrophe. The girl said:

"Let us look into the hollow, and see how much it was enlarged by the earthquake. I have an idea that we may also find something there in which we are interested."

Baldoni obeyed the impulse given by her arm, and they skirted the little enclosure till they reached the edge of the ravine, which extended in the direction of their own cottage. The earth was torn up in many places, but the shrubs, interlaced with clinging vines, concealed the ravages which had been made, and for some time nothing was revealed to the suspicious eyes of the girl.

Suddenly Pepita stopped, and pointed significantly to a dead kid, which lay in the deepest part of the narrow rift. She rapidly said:

"There—there lies the confirmation of my suspicions. Beside that dead animal is the top of a pine apple; it is one of those I sent Lucia, and the kid has perished from eating it. Yes; the things I sent her were thrown there, for I now see fragments of broken glass scattered among the undergrowth. Are you not satisfied now that she must die?"

Baldoni gazed with dilating eyes upon the swollen form of the poor kid.

"Death shall be the last resource. I will try every other means to ensure our safety before I resort to that. If extreme measures become necessary, I pledge myself to take them; but you must trust to me."

"You are very mysterious, and I feel that it will be far better to confide in me fully. You are weak enough to tamper with your own safety, because the pretty face of this girl has pleased your fancy."

"It may be so, for I would give much to call her mine. Her life shall be safe so long as a chance remains that she may be wrought on to accept me."

"I cannot see what there is in Lucia's baby face to make you men so crazy about her. The old marquis, Vittorio, and yourself, seemed to have vied with each other in your stupid admiration of her charms."

Baldoni smiled grimly.

"You cannot deny that she is beautiful; but with me that is not her greatest attraction. Some day you will know why I so earnestly desire to marry her. I cannot explain my motives now, and we had better hasten on, or Lettorio will be waiting for us."

Finding it impossible to induce him to speak more plainly, Pepita continued her walk in sullen silence till they reached their own door.

(To be continued.)

THE WEDDING-RING.—Mr. Massingberd, in his recent "Lectures on the Prayer-book," there accounts for the connection between the wedding-ring and the bride's fourth finger:—"According to the old service-books the practice was for the man to place the ring first on the tip of the thumb, reckoned as the first finger, saying, 'In the name of the Father; then on the second finger, saying, 'and of the Son; then on that of the third finger, saying, 'and of the Holy Ghost; and so finally on the fourth with the word 'Amen,' and so remained on the fourth, where it does and will remain on all properly-married ladies; and thus the custom is accounted for."

THE LIONS AND LYNXES OF UKUNU.—Lions and lynxes are considered the sole property of the sultan, and form part of his right and revenue. When carried in, lashed on a frame on men's shoulders, and placed at his door, drums are beat, the women shout, great excitement prevails, and a dance usually takes place about the carcass. I had the curiosity to measure the length of one lion, and found it was three steps from the root of the tail to the nose, and in passing round it was said to have subjected myself to a fine of two fathoms of calico; but this I refused, and never did pay, because I had not stepped over it. The putrid flesh is cut in pieces, and boiled by the sultan in person. All the grease is preserved as valuable magic medicine, the tail and paws are hung over his doorway, and the skin skillfully pegged out in the sun to dry, is prepared for the sultan's wear, as no one else dare use it. The colour of a young male lion was a pale ochre, with distinct dark spots on his hind legs. The lynx is even more highly prized than the lion, though only the size of, and a little heavier, than an English fox, with a stumpy, short, curled back, dog-tail, and tips of hair to his black ears. The ceremony observed on the arrival of a lion or lynx is curious:—The sultan, sultana, and the sultan's wife next in rank, sit on stools placed in the open air, with the dead animal in front of them, the crowd all round

squatted or standing. A paste is made from the serpent with water upon a stone. Spots of this white ointment are placed by the sultan's own hands upon the forehead, chest, tips of the shoulders, instep, and palms of the hands of himself and the two wives, and drums and dancing continue afterwards for some hours.—"A Walk Across Africa," by Captain J. A. Grant.

RAIN.

But what becomes of the rain? Would that I could answer this question satisfactorily. We all understand the general theory of the aqueous circulation, but the deepest philosophy and the keenest science are not able to fathom its details, or to comprehend in their fulness the world of wonderful adaptations which the question unfolds. We all know that the drops of rain percolate through the soil, and collect in natural reservoirs formed between the layers of rock, and that these reservoirs supply the springs. The rills from numerous adjacent springs unite to form a brook, which increases as it flows, until it finally becomes the majestic river, rolling silently on its course. Every drop of that water has been an incessant wanderer since the dawn of creation, and it will soon be merged again in the vast ocean, only to begin anew its familiar journey.

If you would gain an idea of the magnitude and extent of this wonderful circulation, you must bring together in imagination all the rivers of the world—the Amazon and the Orinoco, the Nile and the Ganges, the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence, and, adding to these the ten thousands of lesser streams, endeavour to form a conception of the incalculable amount of water which, during twenty-four hours, they pour into the vast basin of the world, and then remember that during the same period at least four times as much water must have been raised in vapour, and scattered in rain over the surface of the land.

Would you form an idea of the importance of this circulation, you must not limit your appreciation to its economical value, as a great source of power, working the mills and the forges of civilized man, and building up vast marts of manufacturing industry, nor must you regard alone its commercial value, bearing as it does on its bosom to the ocean the freight of empires. These applications of power, however important in themselves, are insignificant in extent compared with those mighty agencies which the aqueous circulation is constantly exerting in nature.

It has been the great agent of geological changes; here washing away continents, and there building them up; here gully-ing out valleys, and there smoothing away inequalities of surface; here dissolving out the particles of metals from the solid rocks, and there collecting them together in beds of useful ores. It has covered the earth with verdure and animal life, by conveying nourishment to the plant and food to the animal. It sustains our own bodies, for it is a portion of this very circulation which ebbs and flows in our veins, and whose pulsations beat out the moments of our lives; and could I bring together in one picture the infinite number of beneficent ends which it has been made by Providence to subserve, I am sure that you would agree with me that there is not in nature stronger evidence of design than in the adaptations of this simple and familiar liquid.—*Professor Cooke.*

LABOURERS' WAGES.—The Government report on this subject gives a detail of more than five hundred cases taken from every county in England, and from the best samples that could be found of the peasantry. In the south-western counties, the rate of wages was 9s. a week; in the midland, from 12s. to 14s.; in Yorkshire, it was 15s.; and in the northern counties it was as high as 17s. and 18s. But it is well known that the greatest difference prevailed in the different localities as to the amount and kind of food taken, and also to the amount of wages too. The labourers had frequently large families, and every child over ten years was contributing to the family means.

DISCOVERY OF A CAVE AT INGLETON.—A cave was discovered a few days ago by Mr. Kidd, of Blue Hall, on his estate, Brunsar, or Brantscar, Ingleton Fells. Immediately behind the house, a high wall of serrated limestone rock runs in an easterly direction, and Mr. Kidd, observing a fissure in the rock near the back door, ordered his man to commence the work of excavation, thinking that, with a little trouble, he might make an excellent wine-cellar. Shortly they made their way into a most beautiful cave, which evidently, from its formation, had been concealed from man. Though this cave is rather narrow throughout, in many places it is very lofty, and it is of considerable length, as the return route occupied an hour. It is roomy at the entrance, but at some places it is necessary to creep, and at others it is from 12 to 25 feet in height. There is a magnificent gallery of semi-transparent stalactites and stalagmites.



[THE SILENT DEATH.]

ALETHE.

CHAPTER I.

The day had been sultry, but as it neared its close, soft and grateful zephyrs breathed balmily through the luxuriant Indian scenery. Earth and air seemed dreaming together. The murmurs of leaves were whispered thoughts, and the ripplings of running waters half-revived memories of the past. The nodding flowers fainted and languished in their own perfumes; the long grass drooped dreamily in the voluptuous atmosphere. The birds ceased to sing, soothed and content with the mere pleasure of mute existence. Even the deadly serpent lay harmless in its coil, robbed for a time of its malice by the all-conquering sweetness of the most delicious climate in the world.

At this pleasing hour, when Nature herself sympathized with her creations, pulsing her own mysterious life into all animate things, a maiden, more beautiful than graceful palm or bending aenea, moved slowly from the trellised verandah of a bamboo cottage to the sheltering canopy of a patriarchal banyan-tree, beneath whose spreading arms she seated herself on the folds of an Indian shawl.

She was a young English girl of eighteen years, with an exquisite form, and a face to love at first sight. Her skin was whiter than the transparent muslin she wore, or the large pearls that encircled her neck and arms, and hung in silvery loops from her dark hair, after the fashion of the natives. Her teeth, seen through her crimson lips, were like drifted snow. Her eyes were large, her face oval and faultless in every feature.

Her expression, as she reclined in the shade of the banyan, was serene and thoughtful. She had brought with her a book, but the falling twilight blurred the pages, and she put it aside, and abandoned herself to the gentle influence of the hour.

What the English beauty thought of, who may tell? Who shall guess the fancies that floated through her pretty head? Perhaps her consciousness was of earth; possibly of a celestial region in the clouds. Whatever were her reflections, it is certain that she presented a most pleasing picture to the eye, which well might be pardoned for returning again and again to the delightful contemplation.

Sometimes her eyes rested pensively upon the foliage at her feet; sometimes they wandered dreamily upward through the thick branches of the trees to sleepy little islands in the clouds; and sometimes the

long silken lashes closed languidly, shutting out everything but the flowing shapes and images in her own brain.

On her right was the bamboo cottage, peeping from a mass of foliage, scented with the odour of the Indian rose, and relieved by the flowing leaves of the scarlet sagittaria, while at her left the tamarind, palm, and the banyan, growing in serried columns, stretched down to the banks of the Jumna River, forming long and shady avenues, not only picturesque to the sight, but most graceful in the tropical heats.

In one of these natural arcades, a nearly naked figure had been lying for the last hour. This half-nude body pertained to and comprised the personality of one of those nomadic natives of India, whose lives, habits, religion, and manner of subsistence, are alike a terror and a mystery.

While he lay nestled in the long grass, he occasionally lifted himself upon his knees, and looked towards the bamboo cottage with an earnestness that evinced no ordinary purpose.

In critically observing his swarthy face, the eyes would first be noticed; not only for their great size, but for the darting brilliancy of the pupil, and the extraordinary quantity of white that surrounded the iris.

His features were large, but not irregular, strongly marked, and, in repose, not repulsive.

As he raised his head, and gazed steadily at the verandah, his parted lips revealed teeth of singular whiteness; they were long, too, and sharp, reminding one of a carnivorous animal. As he appeared then, his mouth was a hungry mouth; his teeth, ravenous teeth; his nose, a nose to scent his victim afar off; his eyes, crafty and pitiless eyes; and his hands, the claws of a beast, to clutch and to rend.

He wore loose trousers, fastened at the waist by a leathern belt. A strip of red cloth was passed over his right shoulder, and tied in a knot under his left arm, which was all he wore from his waist upward. His feet were shod with sandals. A narrow band of white cloth around his head, kept his long, black, coarse hair from falling over his face. A stout cord was coiled about his body, just above the leathern belt, and secured by a knot.

This strange being might have been thirty-five years of age.

When he perceived the English girl issuing from the bungalow and approaching the banyan, his sooty features worked with excitement. A wild gleam illuminated his eyes.

When she had seated herself, he began to crawl towards her. His windings resembled those of the

wily serpent that glides through grass and foliage unseen and unheard.

No sound gave warning of his approach.

By-and-bye he reached the banyan-tree, and, rising, stood screened by its trunk, on the opposite side of which reclined the unconscious maiden, whose appearance we have imperfectly described.

Standing erect in the mellow twilight, his brawny figure was not unlike a statue of bronze. With a gliding motion of the hands he unknotted the cord at his waist, and with singular dexterity made a noose at one end.

He moved quietly around the tree until the whole person of the beautiful young English girl was in view.

With the cord in his right hand, and a dark and terrible smile upon his lips, he gazed at the rare vision before him.

Changes swept over his face as he looked; but in the whirl of varied emotions there was not one softening flash of pity. His lips parted more and more, showing the sharp hungry teeth. His nostrils dilated; his eyes darted fiery glances; his chest rose and fell, responsive to the fluctuations of his dark spirit; and the great muscles of his arms swelled and quivered.

Suddenly the cord shot from his hand, and the noose was descending with unerring precision over the fairest head in India, when that pitiless arm was arrested, and a retributive hand grasped the murderous and malign being by the throat. The cord fell to the ground, and a fierce struggle followed.

The lady not knowing what had happened, and taken entirely by surprise, sprang to her feet, and beheld the violent but brief contest with terror and amazement.

The native being very athletic and agile, soon managed to slip away from his assailant, who was a young man, wearing the uniform of a British officer. The native, though at liberty, instead of disappearing in the jungle, ran a few yards and stopped. Crossing his arms moodily on his breast, he eyed the man who had thwarted his fiendish purpose with searching and sullen curiosity.

"What has happened?" cried the lady. "What is the meaning of this?"

The officer pointed to the cord that was lying on the ground at the foot of the tree. She seemed at once to comprehend the frightful nature of the danger she had escaped. She grew whiter than a lily. She pressed her hand upon her heart to still its startled throbbings. For a moment darkness filmed her eyes, her limbs trembled, her breath came and went in

gasps. Presently the dimness and dizziness swept from sense and sight. Lifting her gaze she saw the half-nude native, his broad breast still agitated, his supple limbs quiver, and an evil smile on his lips.

The cord at her feet, the visage, and expression of the native, with the circumstance of his silent approach, combined to give her a perfect apprehension of his design.

"A Thug!" she murmured, pale with horror.

"A Thug!" repeated the officer, looking from her to the native, with a perceptible shiver.

He felt for the pistol at his belt. It was not there. It had fallen from his person during the struggle, and he now perceived to his dismay that the native held it in his hand.

The officer glanced at the beautiful girl with a troubled countenance.

The Thug's starting orbs glittered triumphantly.

"Leave us! You are not safe!" said the young man, in a low and warning voice.

"He is armed."

"Fear not," said the Thug, disdainfully. "I am the servant of the cord. What it will not do, I leave undone. I deal little with fire and steel."

The young English girl remained riveted to the spot. There was a fearful fascination in his restless eyes. His parted lips and white teeth reminded her of tales she had heard of ghouls and vampires.

"Begone, wretch!" cried the officer, in a tone of loathing and indignation.

"I go," answered the Thug, "at no man's bidding."

"Why have you sought my life?" asked the lady, overcoming her natural repugnance to one whose purpose was so dreadful.

"I make no choice," replied the Thug, a smile like dark lightning flitting over his malevolent mouth. "I am the child of the cord, and the slave of the silent death."

The lady shuddered.

"I am one of the appointed destroyers of mankind," he added, in a voice noticeably clear and resonant. "I glide here and there with the soft step of the prowling panther. Like an arrow, I go where I am sped."

"Go then," said the young man, "and pollute this place no longer with your presence."

"Call not down on your head the curse of the Stranglers!" returned the Thug, menacingly.

"Where dwell the Stranglers?" inquired the officer.

"In every part of India. They wait at your tables; they sit at your feet; they build mud cottages; they till the ground; they deal in merchandise; they do all things that others do. Sit down in your bungalow; walk among the trees; smoke your pipe beneath the shade of the palm; repose on your couch at noonday; yet the cord and the silent death are ever near! Where dwells the Strangler? Here, there, everywhere! In the bamboo cottage; in the mud hut; in the great houses of the English; and in the tents of the wandering Parsee."

The Thug paused, glanced at the two before him, enjoying both their surprise and horror. Advancing, he recovered the cord, which he coiled around him as before, being careful the while to keep the pistol turned towards the officer.

"We shall meet again," he added, slowly moving to the avenue of trees; then, pointing the pistol upwards, discharged all its barrels rapidly. Casting the empty weapon upon the ground, the native darted into the jungle and disappeared.

CHAPTER II.

WHILE the fair young English girl and the officer stood looking at the place where the Strangler had disappeared, a military, middle-aged gentleman issued from the cottage, and approached them.

He had a rotund body, a rosy face, and twinkling, good-natured eyes.

He reached the parties without being seen by them. He stood a few seconds without speaking, quite at a loss to account for their silence.

Obtaining, presently, a view of the young man's face, he addressed him with much warmth.

"Lieutenant Kavanagh, I am delighted to see you! How goes the rebellion? What news from the army? What brings you here? How came you *tête-à-tête* with my ward? Know her, I suppose? Ida Macgregor! Fine piece of womanhood! Like an old fool, I'm fond of her. Love her about as well as I do Melicent. Why don't you speak, sir? What the deuce do you mean, sir? Can't you do anything but stare at the girl?"

"Major Rainbold," answered the young officer, blushing, "you overwhelm me with questions any or all of which I would willingly answer if proposed one at a time. If this lady be your ward, I assure you it was quite unknown to me, having found her under

circumstances that admitted of none of the formalities of etiquette."

"Formalities, sir!"—he laid his hand on the hilt of his sword—"I'll have all the formalities at my bungalow that were ever thought of."

Turning his regards upon Ida Macgregor, he observed her extreme pallidness. "What has occurred," he added, instantly, with changed manner. "Bad news from Cawnpore? Sepoys coming?"

"First," replied the officer, "introduce me to your ward."

"Certainly. Miss Macgregor, permit me to present to you one of my army friends, Lieutenant Neal Kavanagh, as brave a young fellow as ever mounted a breach."

"My dear guardian," said Miss Macgregor, "he has already proved his courage. I am indebted to his friendly arm for what life is left in me."

"There seems enough of it left to make your cheeks red, girl. Oh, you're both doing it," said the major, remarking that their faces were suffused.

"I have had a visit," said Miss Macgregor, with a shudder, "from one of those execrable creatures called 'Thugs,' or 'Stranglers.'"

Major Rainbold's rosy countenance grew a shade less glowing. He instinctively looked at the young woman's neck, to see if the mark of a cord were on it.

"His dreadful purpose was thwarted at the last moment by the timely interposition of your friend," she added.

"I hope," cried the major, grasping Kavanagh's hand, and shaking it cordially, "that you shot the wretch?"

"Unfortunately, I had not the opportunity. He escaped," answered Kavanagh.

"It is greatly to be regretted! I should like to have the hanging of this terrible sect, which, it is said, infests the entire country. But how goes the rebellion?"

The major gallantly proffered his arm to his ward, who looked faint, and needed of support.

"The rebellion," replied the lieutenant, "goes badly enough. The country is thoroughly aroused. But few Sepoys remain faithful to us, and, I say it with sorrow, there is no place of safety for English residents in India. My visit here is partly for the purpose of giving you timely warning, and partly on account of a slight wound which I received two days ago, in an engagement near Cawnpore. If you know of any place of security, it is your duty, Major Rainbold, to seek it without delay. The most horrible barbarities are being daily practised. Women and children excite no pity in the hearts of these monsters. Revolting cruelties are hourly perpetrated."

Ida trembled on her guardian's arm.

"These dreadful tales have too often reached me even in this seclusion. I wish I could buckle on my sword, and hasten to the aid of our gallant countrymen, but my wounds are not yet healed, and that is not the worst of it. I cannot leave my girls unprotected. Heaven knows," added the Major, with emotion, "where I shall find a place to hide them from the fury of these raging demons."

"I have seen," said Kavanagh, in a suppressed voice, "the wives and daughters of our gallant officers backed to pieces in the streets, as if they were of no more consideration than beasts of prey. Neither youth, beauty, nor innocence have power to soften the hearts of the rebels. The mutinous Sepoys are the most cruel of all."

While they were conversing, they walked slowly around the open area, in the centre of which stood the patriarchal banyan-tree. Major Rainbold was pondering on what he had heard, when he descried a man, mounted on an enormous elephant, approaching from one of the long and shady avenues running to the river, and immediately called attention to the same.

"Be not alarmed," said Kavanagh. "This is an eccentric friend of mine—with whose oddities I am sure you will be entertained. I had quite forgotten him, having left him at a short distance back to search for your residence on foot. Growing impatient at my long absence, he has followed, doubtless, at a venture. His style of travelling is as unique as his character. Here he is!"

The man on the elephant now advanced to the banyan-tree, and Kavanagh, stepping forward, said:

"Allow me to introduce to you Mr. Barnabas Hutton, an enterprising gentleman from England. Major Rainbold and Miss Macgregor."

"How do you do, Mr. Hutton?" said the Major, cordially, endeavouring to reach high enough to grasp the hand held out to him by the new comer.

"I'm pretty jolly, thank ye! Never mind shakin'; shake arter I git down. How d'ye do, Miss Gregor? Hope you're pretty jolly, too?"

Before Barnabas Hutton alights, we will take a hurried survey of him and his elephant. He was dressed in the light and airy garb of a native, and with his tanned face and hands, looked more like a

Sepoy than an Englishman. He had a pleasant though not handsome countenance. His mouth and nose were large, his cheek-bones rather high, and his face, though thin, was not really sharp, save in its expression. His hair was long and of a light brown. On his head he wore a military cap, with a pompon in it. He had a short and thinly-growing beard, giving one the impression that the crop had been blighted by an untimely frost.

Barnabas Hutton was armed. He had pistols and a dagger in his belt, and a sword girt at his loins, and a long native lance in his hand.

The elephant was no less an object of remark than its owner. Its extraordinary size was sufficient to make it noticeable; not to mention the fancy painting that appeared on its huge sides and haunches.

The Englishman slipped down from the great animal, and seeing that the major was contemplating it with much interest, immediately became eloquent in its praise.

"He's as knowin' as he is large," he said, with pride. "You may travel all over Injy without findin' his mate. His name is Methuselah—called Methuselah on account of his age. He's lived some't less nor two hundred year. Bought that elephant when I first came to this country. Wouldn't part with him for his weight in gold. He's a powerful consumer, but is strong according."

"A magnificent animal!" observed the major.

"A portable gallery of the fine arts, too. Got all the gods and goddesses of the country painted on his starboard and larboard quarters, the British lion and unicorn on his haunches. Has a fine eff on the native critters, this paintin' has. Think I am a great lord, got up without regard to expense and travelling on my own account, carein' no more for rebellions than I do for the squabbles of the little Hindoos that I see tumbling about the mud-huts."

"I wonder how you can travel in times like these," said Miss Macgregor.

"Well, I have kept sort of close since the difficulties with the Sepoys broke out about the greased cartridges and things. You see, I left my native shores to set up the business of nabob, ride on elephants, trade, specklerate, make money, and finally marry a live begum or queen—a kind of female which, I understand, is plenty in these parts."

"I heartily wish you success," said Ida, smilingly.

"Bliged to ye, ma'am, but I've 'bout give up the idea of taking up with a begum. The truth is, I'm going to join the army, and with this same sword, cut, hack, slash, gash, slay, and put to flight them Sepoys who make no more of killin' a woman nor they do of eatin' biled rice. They don't—no."

"Your resolution is a good one," said the major, "and I have no doubt but you and Methuselah will acquit yourselves creditably."

"Well, I think we shall out our bigness into 'em, and that won't be a hole much smaller nor a four story bungalow with a verandah all round. When Methuselah and I come down on the treacherous critters, they'll think that a heathen temple on wheels is arter 'em."

"This young lady," said Neal Kavanagh, "has just escaped a most imminent danger. She has been in peril from one of these Phausigars, or Stranglers, of whom we were recently talking. I had the happiness to reach the spot before the fatal cord had done its work."

"Bullets and bungalows," exclaimed Barnabas; "I'd like to have Methuselah wind his trunk about twice round that critter's neck, and give it the gin-wine corkscrew twist. What such a low article of human natur' was set a runnin' for is more'n I know. Were'n't you prettily scared, Miss Griggory?"

Ida confessed that she was much terrified.

"You couldn't help it more'n nothin'! A cord you see, isn't jest the right kind of a thing to put round a gal's neck—leastways, I didn't used to think so when I went sparkin'! But to return to the text, as the missionaries say. What become of the throttlin' cuss?"

"He effected his escape into the jungle," replied Kavanagh.

"Shouldn't wonder if I see the critter. As I rid up through the trees, I met a swarthy, half-naked chap, with a white rag round his head. He glared at me malevolent, and showed the whites of his eyes and the ivory of his teeth, in a way I didn't care to see several times."

"It was the same," said Kavanagh.

"If I'd a knowed it, I'd put Methuselah on to him, quicker'n a comet could switch its tail. Perhaps you don't know that this lump of flesh is nigh about human, and understands every word I say to him? He does. Yes."

"Is he docile?" asked Miss Macgregor, highly amused by the quaintness of Hutton.

"Docile? He couldn't be docile-er." Then, turning to the elephant, "Methuselah, give me a boost!"

The colossal creature gently coiled his trunk round

Hilton, and, lifting him steadily, gently placed him on the top of his head.

"If I should say the word, he'd set you all up here in a twinkling. If I was to tell him to throw you over that bungalow, or trample you under his feet, he'd do it cheerfully. If I was to order him to pull up the trees, tear your house to bits, and play the deuce generally, he'd do it willin', he would. Yes."

"He must be a great comfort to you," said the major, drily.

"A comfort about the size of Juggernaut," replied Barnabas, practically. "It's true I can't take him within doors, but there's plenty o' room for him out-side. He loves me, this mass of flesh does. I'm his friend, companion, and providence. I can sleep o' nights atween his great feet wif safety. Put me down, Methusalem, and show 'em what you'd do if I should be tackled."

The man spoke in his usual tone of voice; but the negation animal seemed to understand his meaning at once. He reached his supple and potent trunk, coiled it again about his master, and set him carefully between his feet; then emitting a peculiar whistle and assuming a menacing attitude, cut the air to the right and left with terrible strokes of his trunk.

Miss Macgregor retreated in alarm, and even the brave Rainbold was not ashamed to fall back a few paces.

"Don't be skittish, miss; he never hurts gals, he don't. No; he's gentle as a lamb or fierce as a lion, as I will him to be. He knows his master, and that's a woman's human criteria does."

By this time some of Major Rainbold's native servants appeared; and Mutton, refusing to part with his favourite till he was properly taken care of, went away with them, followed by his dumb friend.

Major Rainbold and his ward returned to the house, accompanied by Kavanagh, each musing on the singular character of their countryman, as well as of that thrilling adventure which had preceded his coming, and which Ida Macgregor did not now desire to hear mentioned.

The young man walked by her side in a pleasing dream, alike vague and undefinable.

A soft influence was upon him, flowing from the presence and person of Ida Macgregor. He feared to speak, lest the sound of his voice should dissolve the spell, and interrupt the bewildering current of his thoughts.

He was far from comprehending the sweet magnetism that was upon him.

For the first time in his life, woman assumed, in his estimation, the graces and characteristics of a superior being.

When he reflected that it had been his fortune to watch her from deadly peril, his heart swelled with grateful emotion. He was almost ready to bless the incident that offered him the privilege of doing her an important service.

Not only the prestige of the lady charmed him, but her beauty, flashing suddenly upon him like a sun, nearly blinded him with its dazzling brilliancy.

He moved beside her as one might enter a new world.

The modest bungalow became a fairy bower, and all its surroundings were transformed by the new and strange enchantment that possessed him.

(To be continued.)

WEIGHT OF CATTLE.—It is estimated from measurement as follows:—The girth is to be taken where it is smallest, squarely round the body, immediately behind the shoulder; the length from the front of the shoulder to the insertion of the tail. Multiply the square of the girth in feet and inches with the length in feet and inches, and the product by .24, .26, .28, .30, according to the fatness of the animal, the result will be the weight of the carcass in imperial stones. The weight of the carcass is to the live weight of the animal as 1 to 2—or a little more than 1 to 2 in cattle; as 8 to 14, or thereabouts, in fat sheep; as 2 to 3 in the case of well-fattened pigs. These proportions vary according to the condition and breed of the animal.

NAVAL AND ORDNANCE.—We have been informed that the action between the Alabama and Kearsarge made a deep impression upon the mind of the French Emperor, and convinced him that rifled guns of comparatively small bore were no match for the heavy Dahlgren and Rodman guns then mounted in vessels of the Kearsarge class. In consequence, the manufacture of six-ton steel rifled guns was delayed, and since then the French Government have, it is said, ordered two of Captain Blakely's 11-in. steel guns, two heavy guns from Sir W. G. Armstrong and Co., and two or more heavy guns from America, all muzzle loaders, the intention being to adopt heavy guns for the French navy, and gradually to remove the present 30-pounder and 50-pounder hooped guns from their ships. We are glad to find that the Lords of the Admiralty are

quite alive to the importance of an efficient plan for mounting heavy guns upon the broadside, and have been lately considering several methods for attaining this great desideratum. We trust, therefore, that the efforts they are now making will be crowned with success, and that in this matter we shall be far ahead of other maritime nations. In America the present plan of working their 7½-ton 11-in. guns upon the broadside seems to have given so little satisfaction that doubts have been expressed as to the iron-sides and other large vessels being able to fight them in a sea-way. As pivot guns, however, these 11-in. have been a decided success, the carriage and slide answering well. In France there is a similar difficulty as to heavy guns.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jesuit," "The Priestess," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER CXXXI.

Law: a game oft lost—as often won—
When might 'gainst right contends: a book
Without an end. Spanish Proverb.

So artful was the defence—with such well-affected feeling was it uttered—that for the first time the baronet began to doubt whether he had not wronged him. Even the suspicions of Mary and her husband were shaken.

"Could I believe you, Harry!" said his uncle, after a pause.

"You may—you may! I was in Switzerland when the infamous outrage was committed! I can prove it by my servant—a hundred witnesses! Could you read my heart, I would lay it cheerfully before you—it has erred towards others, but not to you! And cheerfully would I resign wealth, rank—all that you imagine I have plotted like some midnight thief to obtain—could I restore to you your wife and son!"

Sir Outhbert sank into a chair as if he had received a sudden blow. In his eagerness to defend himself, the guilty man had overshot the mark. That one word "son" gave the lie to his asseverations—proclaimed his guilty knowledge of Margaret's abduction—rendered doubt certainty, and branded his felon name with infamy for ever.

"Son!" repeated the baronet. "Oh, villain—villain—unnatural, dishonourable villain! Son! Charles—Mary—you heard the words which told me I am a father? God watch over the innocent babe and its unhappy mother! A father," he added, wildly, "whose eyes may never rest upon his offspring's features—whose voice will never bless him!"

So completely was Harry Sinclair crushed by the moral evidence of his crime, that he could not recover from his confusion.

"You mistake!" he stammered; "when I said son, I meant—yes—that is, supposing heaven had—"

"Liar!" exclaimed the baronet, starting from his seat with sudden energy; "mean, despicable liar! You have broken all bonds—the tie of blood—between us! I demand the satisfaction due to my outraged honour! My pistols, Charles—my pistols! See!" he added, his voice sinking almost to childish weakness; "my hand is firm—quite firm! Your arm, Charles—your arm! You will support me! God! the room swims round, and—"

The excitement which gave to the dying man a momentary strength had left him; and, but for the sustaining arm of Charles Briancourt, he must have fallen to the ground. Harry Sinclair, without daring to meet the indignant glances of his former friends, crept like a detected cur towards the door.

"Leave us!" said Mary, who was applying restoratives to the clammy brow of his uncle. "Should he find you still here when he recovers, the sight will kill him!"

"Still I affirm my innocence!" replied the heartless ruffian, with recovered assurance.

Charles silently pointed to the door: the look of mingled scorn, pity, and disgust with which both he and his wife regarded him was more than the detected felon could endure. Like many in the world who ruffle it bravely, he could endure his own contempt—but not that of others; he fled like a guilty thing, leaving his outraged benefactor and uncle to the care of his sympathising friends.

Sir Outhbert was borne to his chamber, which he never quitted till carried from it to his grave. The shock of that interview had been too much for his exhausted frame: he died blessing his wife and son, after having recommended them to the friendship of Charles Briancourt and Mary. The old man's confidence in their return was unabated to the last: he expired with a soldier's courage—a Christian's hope.

Immediately after his death, a messenger was despatched to his nephew, to inform him of the event. He at once, by the advice of Quirk, assumed the title of Sir Harry Sinclair.

When the will of the baronet was read, it was discovered, to the great annoyance of his presumptive heir, as well as his disinterested friends, that the immense personal wealth of the deceased was bequeathed to Sir Robert Briancourt and his son Charles, in trust for Lady Sinclair. The above-named gentlemen were appointed executors, with full power to expend such sums as they should think fitting in prosecuting the search for the recovery of the lady and her son—of whose existence the testator expressed his firm conviction; and directed every legal means to be taken by his representatives to defeat the claims of his nephew.

"Preposterous!" ejaculated Quirk—who, as the legal adviser of Sir Harry, was present at the opening of the will.

"Perfectly!" added his grandson, Phineas.

"My uncle was mad!" exclaimed their confederate and dupe in the great scheme of villany upon which he had staked life, as well as honour and reputation.

"That, Harry, must be proved!" observed Charles Briancourt. "As the executors of your late uncle, we can only carry out his will!"

"Harry!" repeated his quondam friend, in a tone of hauteur beneath which he vainly strove to hide the mortification he endured; "I believe, sir, it is usual between gentlemen, whose acquaintance is so slight as ours, to address each other by their titles!"

"Oh, certainly, Mr. Sinclair!"

"Mr. Sinclair! Sir Harry Sinclair!" replied Harry, his anger increasing every instant at the cool, contemptuous manner with which his claims were treated.

"That the law only can decide!" observed Sir Robert Briancourt; "at present our course is clear."

"And that is?"

"To compel you to prove your title to the estates—to fight the battle of honour and integrity inch by inch. It will not be the first time," he added, glancing at the lawyer and Phineas, "I have been compelled to pursue a similar course."

Quirk bit his thin lips till they almost bled—whilest his grandson affected an indifference he was very far from feeling. Finding that the executors of the late baronet were determined to adhere to the very letter of his will, Harry and his friends quitted the house.

"I had better have taken the old man's offer," muttered the nephew, with a sigh of regret.

"Had you played your cards properly," exclaimed Quirk, "you might have secured both. As it is, the law must now decide! The money," he added, bitterly, "which the old fool has left will do one good, at least."

"And what may that be?" inquired Phineas.

"Pay for the proceedings!" replied his grandfather; "pay for the proceedings! The costs won't have to be taken from the estate!"

Harry felt rejoiced at the assurance. He remembered the vast sums he was already indebted to the speaker: to pay them must have made him a poor man for years; a law suit and costs would have ruined him.

Although perfectly hopeless of success, Charles Briancourt and his father resolved to dispute the claim of Harry both to the title and estates of his dead uncle. It was in vain that the most eminent members of the long robe told them that his right was indisputable: no positive proof existing that an heir had even been born—much less that it was a son. Still they persevered, and the cause in due time came on for trial.

Without wearying the patience of our readers by a detail of the proceedings at Westminster—where the cause was argued before a crowded court—it is enough to state that the decision was in favour of the plaintiff: who found himself at last, by the verdict of the jury, the legal possessor of the title and lands he had so deeply sinned for.

As Quirk had predicted, the executors had to pay the costs of the suit out of the personal property of the deceased baronet. On the termination of the trial, Sir Harry threw himself into his carriage, and, accompanied by the lawyer and Phineas, drove to his chambers in the Albany. They had not been long seated—in fact, the words of congratulation had scarcely died upon the lips of the disinterested Mr. Quirk—when the door of the study slowly opened, and an aged crone tottered rather than walked into the room.

It was Madge Neil—who, since her release from prison, had taken up her abode secretly with her foster-son.

"Weel, is it over?" she demanded, eagerly.

"Even so, Madge!"

"And you are—"

"Sir Harry Sinclair!" replied the young man.

"I kenned it was to be sae!" exclaimed the old nurse, gazing upon him with a look of mingled triumph and affection; "my bairn—my foster-bairn—is laird o' the bonnie lands o' Colmsill—and no the stranger's child! But why," she added, "are ye sae sad? Are no the hills and the green vales a' your ain?"

"All, Madge!" replied the baronet, impatiently; "all! But leave me now—I have business with these gentlemen."

"Let them wait," answered the woman sternly; "it's their place, Harry—it's their place! They have served ye for siller—for the world's gain—and so for the heart's love, like old Madge Neil. Weel, weel—I'll no contrary ye. When a bairn, ye couldna bear the gainsay o' your will. I'll leave ye the noo—but ye maun first tell when do ye start for Colmsil?"

"In the morning,"

"Enough," muttered the nurse, "enough, I'll be ready!"

"Ready!" interrupted Quirk. "Is the woman mad? What does she mean by ready?"

Madge, who had nearly reached the door, turned sharply round.

"What do I mean!" she repeated; "I mean to be there! Noo do ye ken my meaning? I have loved him better than my ain flesh and bluid—better than my ain saul! I have sinned for him!" she added, emphatically; "and all I ask in return is, to see him in the seat o' his forbears!"

"Ridiculous!" exclaimed Phineas; "your presence there will awaken all sorts of unpleasant suspicions. You must remain in England."

"England!" screamed the crone; "and what should I do in the kinty of the Saxon, and my bairn in his ain land? Harry, ye dinna wish it—you canna wish it," she added, looking wistfully in his face; "it wad kill me!"

"Indeed! but I do wish it, nurse," answered her foster-son, coolly; "at this moment, when all sorts of reports are rife, your presence at Colmsil would be most embarrassing."

"Indeed! Fine words—fine words!" muttered the old Highland woman, rocking herself to and fro upon the crutched stick which supported her feeble steps.

"You must remain here till I can arrange for your return to Scotland. In a few months—"

"Yes—or a year or two," added Quirk.

Madge Neil turned first to one speaker, then to the other, as if she did not clearly catch the import of the words; but when satisfied that she did comprehend them, her pride as well as her affection took the alarm.

"Gin I live, Harry Sinclair," she exclaimed, at the same time stamping her foot upon the floor, "I'll be there! I have sworn to dee in my auld neuk at Colmsil, let wha will bid me forth! Ane mon did sae—your uncle, Harry—and he lived to rae the hour he drove me frae his gate."

"Well—well," replied the baronet, anxious to rid himself of her importunity; "we will speak of this in the morning. Leave me now—I have affairs—accounts—in short, I wish to be alone."

Without raising her eyes towards him, or uttering a single word of adieu, Madge Neil walked from the room.

"She is offended!" observed Phineas.

"And may be dangerous!" added the lawyer.

"Dangerous!" said his client, with a laugh. "You do not know how strong is the fidelity which a Highland woman bears to her foster-child: she will sin, suffer, die for him—but never betray him. Could you proffer Madge, at this moment, when her wrath is bitter at what she doubtless considers my ingratitude, the coined wealth of the world, to consent to my injury, she would spurn it."

"A primitive race, these Highland women!" observed Quirk, drily.

His grandson mentally questioned whether they ought not to be classed with the American Indians and other savages—so incomprehensible did it seem to his sordid nature that any civilised being should resist the influence of the only idol he knew and worshipped—gold.

The rest of the evening was passed by the three confederates in going over the accounts. Bonds were produced—interest was reckoned. When everything was summed up, the baronet found that it would take rather more than half his fortune for twelve years to pay off the claims of Quirk alone. Other demands, equally pressing, would be sure to come upon him; so that, after all, it became a question whether he would be able to reside upon the property he had dearly won.

He expressed himself in this sense to his adviser—it was the very opening the old man wished.

"What a fortunate thing it is," he observed, by way of introducing the subject nearest his heart, "that you are unmarried."

His dupe regarded him steadily.

"And have no son!" added Phineas; "because, in that case, you could not sell!"

"Sell!" repeated Sir Harry.

"My dear fellow," replied Quirk, filling himself a glass of wine, "it must come to that at last. In less than five days you will be served with a dozen writs."

"Indeed!"

"Brockman and Giles have already taken proceedings."

"Have they?"

"And so have Pluck and Pigeon!" added Phineas, in the same cool, easy tone; "the old boy is right—you must sell."

"And where shall I find a purchaser?" demanded the baronet, haughtily.

"One might be found!" answered the lawyer, deliberately.

"Yourself, perhaps?"

The old man slightly raised his shoulders, to intimate by the action that possibly he might be tempted.

"I have heard you," resumed the young man, "patiently—now hear me. Before I consent to sell an acre—mark me, a single acre—of Colmsil—I will confess everything to Sir Robert Briancourt—your share, as well as my own, in the abduction of Margaret—and the birth of an heir! What!" he added, in a tone of mingled defiance and contempt; "do you think that I have sinned to see the inheritance of my race pass into such hands?"

Quirk began to feel very uneasy, and his grandson observed that he was not treating them like gentlemen.

"To-morrow I start for Scotland!" continued Sir Harry; "accompany me or not at your own pleasure! I know that the lands have not been let at half their value; leases must soon fall in: so my position is not so desperate as you imagine! Good night, gentlemen!" he added; "I shall be most happy to receive you as guests, but never as the owners of Colmsil."

Before they separated, a truce—hollow as the hearts of those who framed it—was patched up between them. It was decided that they should all start at the appointed hour for Scotland; and that when arrived there arrangements should be entered into for raising the rental and squeezing the last shilling it was possible to obtain from the estate.

Great was the wrath of the old nurse when she discovered that her foster-son had started for the north without her. She determined to follow, and see him take possession of the inheritance purchased with so much crime: she felt—and truly, perhaps—that the scene would be incomplete without her presence.

Instead of proceeding direct to the Frith of Forth, Sir Harry and his companions remained some days in Edinburgh, to make inquiries about the value of the land, and the possibility of raising a large loan upon the rental. For once the baronet continued obstinate in his refusal to sell. Quirk felt a nervous anxiety to be paid: like most speculators, he wished to realise as quickly as possible. This delay not only gave Madge Neil, but others, time to arrive at Colmsil before them.

Great was the surprise when the nurse made her appearance at the mansion: the old domestics received her coolly; but she paid little heed to their looks and whispers—she had nothing to hope or fear from them. When the day arrived, she attired herself in her best, and took her station at the great gates to receive her foster-son.

"Faith, Mrs. Neil, and ye prank it rarely!" observed the butler—a sly old Scotchman.

Madge tossed her head impatiently.

"I wonder ye didna gang forward," he continued, "at the head of the tenantry—instead of the steward—to welcome the young laird."

"My place is here!" replied the old woman, striking her stick upon the ground; "here, upon the threshold o' his hame, to speak the words o' welcome, and bid God bless him to his ain. I'll no live to see it lang!" she added; "but I am repaid, to hae been spared to see it."

"Nae doubt, Mistress Neil," said the butler; "but it maun be a great gratification to you—seeing that, gin ye are no belied, ye helped you foster-bairn to his gude fortune."

The angry retort upon the lips of the old woman was repressed with difficulty—for her temper, like her feelings, was quick and passionate. Further conversation between the two domestics was cut short by the approach of a carriage, which came dashing at a rapid rate through the park.

"The laird—the laird!" shouted the old man.

"Fool!" exclaimed his companion. "Wadna the tenantry be with him? Sir Harry wadna sink into his hame like a packman to his clachan. It's some o' the guests: do ye no ken the livery?"

The butler strained his sight very hard, and after some minutes declared that the fellow upon the box was in plain clothes.

The carriage drove up to the house. Three gentlemen and a lady, who was closely veiled, alighted from it.

"Has your master arrived?" demanded the Laird of Dunlass, who was one of the visitors.

"No the yet."

"But you expect him?"

"Every instant!" replied the old woman. "Do you no hear the shouts o' his people, as they welcome him

to his ain? Hark!" she added, as the cries of the tenantry rose still louder. "A little mair—a little mair—and I shall see him."

A second carriage drove up, containing three or four more gentlemen, who alighted, and ordered their vehicle to be driven to the back of the house—which they entered, instead of remaining at the porch to welcome their new neighbour.

The suspicion which this singular conduct naturally excited was dissipated by the approach of the baronet.

First came a body of the Colmsil tenantry on horseback; then a crowd of yeomen and the sons of the neighbouring gentry, surrounding the open carriage in which sat Sir Harry Sinclair and his two friends, Quirk and Phineas. The baronet placed his hand upon his heart and bowed: his reception was quite enthusiastic. Just as he rose to make the usual speech, his eyes fell upon the features of old Madge: he faltered, and felt disconcerted.

"Cheer for the laird!" shouted the aged woman, in a tone of the greatest excitement. "The young o' the kestral has no made its hame in the nest o' the eagle! The auld bluid o' the Sinclairs is master o' Colmsil!"

CHAPTER CXXXII

Turn as we will, our sin is sure to find us.
Crimes are like shadows, seen not in the dark;
The sun of truth appears—and justice
Notes them.

Old Play.

THE triumphant heir—the shouts of the assembled tenantry still ringing in his ears—entered the mansion of his forefathers, closely followed by his evil genius, Quirk and Phineas: the former wore a moody and somewhat dissatisfied air—for his deep-laid schemes had only partially succeeded. His dupe refused to sell—and years, consequently, must elapse before he could realize the vast claims—amounting to more than half his fortune—which he held upon the broad lands of Colmsil.

Sir Harry Sinclair—for so for the present we shall continue to designate him—felt secretly annoyed that none of the neighbouring gentry had arrived to welcome him. His temper was still further tried by the unexpected appearance of Madge Neil, whom he had left in London. He trembled lest her presence should revive recollections and suspicions which it was his interest should be buried for ever.

"You here!" he muttered, angrily, as he passed her in the porch.

"And where should I be," demanded the old woman, fixing her keen gray eyes reproachfully upon his, "but in the hame o' my foster-bairn? Have I no the right to be here?"

"Right!" repeated the lawyer; "what right?"

"The right of affection!" replied Madge, promptly; "but you canna understand that! Weel, then, the right o' service, which a' the siller he has inherited could ney pay! The right," she added, in an undertone, "o' mutual crime! Do you comprehend me noo?"

"I am perfectly satisfied of your fidelity," observed her foster-son, striving to conceal his vexation.

"Ye hae had the proof!" was the reply.

"But the fact is, dear Madge, that—you remember the reports which were rife at the time of my saul's disappearance; and I was fearful that your being at Colmsil might revive them. You see," he continued, "that none of my late uncle's friends are here to welcome me."

"No here," repeated the nurse, at the same time pointing with an air of triumph to the door of the library; "they are a' here—Dunlass, Sir John Murchison, the colonel, and his two sons! Gang in, Harry—gang in, and welcome them to Colmsil—to your ain house! Gang and bid welcome to your friends—the real stated gentry, the auld bluid o' Scotland—and nae bits o' scribes and sic-like bodies."

The glance of contempt which the speaker directed towards Quirk and his grandson was even more expressive than her words. Both winced under it; and the old lawyer mentally resolved that, if his client should be driven, as he anticipated, to reside on the continent, and the management of the estate fall into his hands, that Madge should pay dearly for the insulting freedom of her speech.

It would be difficult to say whether Sir Harry was more gratified or puzzled by the announcement that so many visitors had arrived at Colmsil. He could not understand why they should remain shut up in the library, instead of welcoming him on the threshold of his abode.

"Come," he said, addressing his two companions; "assist me to receive my friends!"

This was uttered with the air of a man resolute to know the worst. As his hand rested for an instant on the handle of the door of the library, he and Quirk both gave an involuntary start.

They had recognized the voice of Charles Briancourt in the room.

"What," they mentally asked themselves, "could be his there?"

"He is ashamed of his auld nurse!" muttered the woman, as the baronet disappeared. "The hame o' her footer-bairn is nae longer a hame for her. He has the kind o' his race, and mair than their pride—mair than their pride! I shouldnae hae lived long to hae been a burthen to him!" she added, bitterly; "but I was rightly punished: the sleugh hound has run down the game—the chase is over, the deer is taken, and the hae nae mair need o' Madge!"

In the pang which the ingratitude of the man for whose advancement she had so deeply sinned inflicted on her heart, the speaker was already punished. So true is it that we have little sympathy even with the crimes that serve us.

When the new master of Colmail entered the library, followed by Quirk and Phineas, he recognized, amidst a group of gentlemen who were standing round the table, the Laird of Dunlass, Sir John Murchison, Colonel Staunton—whom he knew to be one of the most active magistrates in the county—his son, a tall, severe-looking personage, who was a perfect stranger to him, and, last of all, his former friend, Charles Briancourt.

The presence of the latter indicated either an insult or a danger: he was not permitted to remain long in the room.

"My dear Dunlass!" he exclaimed, advancing towards the first-named gentleman of the party, "this is the most kind—most friendly! Sir John, your servant! Welcome—welcome to Colmail!"

The old laird drew himself up, and instead of taking the extended hand of the speaker, acknowledged his familiarity merely by a formal bow; the baronet followed the example. Quirk and Phineas, who were close observers of all that passed, began to exchange uneasy glances.

"I should feel surprised and deeply mortified," continued Sir Harry, "at this unlooked for coldness, did not recognize the cause in the presence of that gentleman!" he added, pointing at the same time to Charles Briancourt, who stood the while regarding him more in sorrow than in anger; "but I have yet to learn by what right he intrudes himself here—certainly not as a guest!"

"Certainly not!" exclaimed the old lawyer, emphatically; "certainly not!"

"He is here as a slanderer and a spy!" observed Phineas, attempting to veil his hatred of Charles by affecting contempt. "Why don't you ring for your servants?" he added, "and turn him out?"

"Stay, Mr. Sinclair!" said Sir John Murchison, as the master of the house extended his hand to reach the bell; "the gentleman is here at our request!"

"Mr. Sinclair!" repeated the guilty man, turning very pale; "it is not usual, I believe, to address men by rank by the prefix 'Mr.'"

"Mr. to one of the oldest baronets in Scotland!" muttered Quirk, trying to look as if he felt very much shocked.

"I see it all!" exclaimed his client, darting a look of intense hatred at his former friend; "the slanderer hath spit his venom here—here on my very hearthstone; but patience hath its limits! I give the lie to the public lie—to this foul slander, and invite him instantly to quit the room and follow me! This last outrage demands a prompt and deadly satisfaction!"

"Stay, Mr. Sinclair!" said the quiet, reserved-looking personage whom Harry had failed to recognize; "I cannot permit this!"

"And who are you, sir," demanded the young man, haughtily, "who presume to dictate to Sir Harry Sinclair in his own house?"

"The procurator fiscal!" replied the gentleman, in the same calm tone. "As to your claim to the title of your late uncle, it is not in my province to decide whether your assumption of it is legal or not; but information has been sworn before these gentlemen and myself, that you were a party to the abduction of Lady Sinclair; and, however painful our duty, it is imperative."

"Information!" exclaimed the culprit, with an affected laugh; "ridiculous! The same lie was urged on the late trial at Westminster: the jury would not listen to it! I was in Switzerland at the time the outrage you allude to—if outrage it was—look please!"

"Distinctly proved by his bankers!" observed Quirk.

"I can swear to it!" added his grandson, eager to encourage his friend. "This is the last effort of disappointed malice to blacken the character of an honorable man! Abduction!" he repeated, scornfully. "I don't believe a word of it. What more probable than that a worthless woman, tired of a husband old enough to be her grandfather, should have abandoned him?"

"And is this your belief, Harry?" demanded Charles Briancourt, for the first time breaking silence.

"It is!"

"What, that Margaret—Oh, shame, man—shame! Has your cheek no blush—your conscience no voice—that you can coolly thus calumniate the angel you have wronged? Harry," added the speaker, "by the memory of the past—that past which was once so truthful and happy—by your hope of the future—recall those shameless words!"

"You hear, gentlemen," exclaimed Harry Sinclair, with a bitter smile; "my accuser descends to entreaty!"

"I am not your accuser," observed Charles Briancourt, gravely; "I suspected the crime, but could not prove it! I had the moral but not the legal certitude of your guilt!"

"You not my accuser?" exclaimed the unhappy man, in a tone of incredulity; "who then? Who else would dare cast a stain upon my name monstrous as it is false? Show me the wretch, that I may give the lie to the foul charge!"

The gentlemen whispered together for a few moments, whilst Charles slowly walked to the door communicating between the library and the drawing-room.

"You demand to see your accuser?" said the procurator fiscal.

"I do—and instantly!"

"It is your right," added the functionary, "and cannot be refused you. Mr. Briancourt, we would willingly have spared the lady the pain of such an interview; but since the prisoner persists—"

"Prisoner!" repeated Quirk, in an indignant tone.

"Preposterous!" echoed his grandson.

"Infamous!" exclaimed Harry; "you will not dare to—"

The door of the room opened, and Mrs. Briancourt appeared, leading Lady Sinclair by the hand. Although pale, changed by sorrow and years, and dressed in the sombre weeds of her widowhood, the conspirators recognized their victim in an instant.

The lawyer uttered a deep groan; the large sums he had advanced to his worthless client, and the still larger ones he hoped to wring from him, seemed melting from his grasp. He was punished where he had sinned—by the loss of his idol—gold; the dross for which he had sold himself fled mockingly from him at the moment he thought he had secured the possession of it.

But what language can paint the confusion, the agony of shame, which wrung the heart of Margaret's former lover? He had broken his pledged faith to her because she was the daughter of a felon; and there he stood a convicted felon himself—exposed to her cold and scornful gaze. Had the earth opened and engulfed him, he would have blessed it—the grave would have been a welcome refuge from the blistering pangs of dishonour; death, or that worse than death—annihilation—had been preferable to his feelings at that moment. Involuntarily he staggered back and sank into a chair, helpless as if a thunder-bolt had riven him.

The culprit was stricken at the moment of his triumph—wealth, rank, all he had sinned for, within his grasp: another added to the many convincing proofs that, however the justice of heaven may be delayed, its judgment is pronounced even at the moment of our sin, and, like an event cradled on the wing of time, is sure to arrive at last.

With a precision which caused every word she uttered to fall like drops of molten lead upon his heart and brain, Lady Sinclair related the particulars of her abduction—his presence on the beach, and attempt to drag her to the boat: her truthful accents carried conviction with them.

"You now know," said the procurator fiscal, addressing himself to the wretched criminal, "why I designated you as the prisoner! If you have anything to urge," he added, "why the magistrates should reconsider their decision, now is the time to speak!"

"Nothing!" murmured the guilty man; "nothing! Do with me as you please!"

Mary and Margaret turned aside to conceal the tears which, despite the wrongs of the latter and the indignation of her friend, the sight of his agony and degradation forced from them.

After a brief consultation, the magistrates announced their decision of committing him to the county gaol, to stand his trial upon forcible abduction.

"Stay!" exclaimed Quirk; "the offence is bailable!"

"You mistake!" said the procurator; "it's felony by the laws both of England and Scotland."

"Abduction, I grant you, is a felony!" replied the lawyer; "but not the attempt to abduct! And even supposing the lady's story to be true—which I utterly and positively repudiate—my client has only been guilty of the last offence—which is bailable! I have heard," he added, "of a law of constructive treason—but never of one of constructive felony."

"Pray, sir," said Sir John Staunton, "may I ask your name?"

"My name!" replied the old man, taken suddenly

aback; "of course you may: no honest man is ashamed of his name."

"No honest man, certainly, is ashamed of his name!" observed the procurator fiscal, significantly.

Still the lawyer hesitated to tell it: he was a prudent man, and thought twice before he answered what he considered an unnecessary question.

"His name is Quirk!" exclaimed Charles Briancourt; "I can vouch for that."

"Of Serjeants' Inn?" demanded the procurator.

"Of Serjeants' Inn!" repeated the lawyer; "I have no wish to conceal it! Why should I? I am a respectable man, well known in my profession, and esteemed, I may add, without vanity, for my integrity."

(To be continued.)

THE MANUFACTURE OF PERFUMES.

CONTRARY to general belief, nearly all the perfumes derived from flowers are not made by distillation, but by maceration or infusion. The odours of flowers do not, as a general rule, exist in them as a store, or in a gland, but they are developed as an exhalation. While the flower breathes it yields fragrance; but kill the flower, and fragrance ceases. It has not been ascertained when the discovery was made of condensing, as it were, the breath of the flower during life: what we know now is that, if a living flower be placed near to butter, grease, animal fat, or oil, these bodies absorb the odour given off by the blossom, and in turn themselves become fragrant. If we spread fresh unsalted butter upon the inside of two dessert-plates, and then fill one of the plates with gathered fragrant blossoms of clematis, covering them over with the second greased plate, we shall find that, after twenty-four hours, the grease has become fragrant. The blossoms, though separated from the parent stem, do not die for some time, but live and exhale odour, which is absorbed by the fat. To remove the odour from the fat, the fat must be scraped off the plates and put into alcohol; the odour then leaves the grease and enters into the spirit, which thus becomes "scent," and the grease again becomes odourless.

The flower farmers of the Var follow precisely this method on a very large scale, making but a little practical variation, with the following flowers—rose, orange, acacia, violet, jasmine, tuberos, and jonquil.

The commercial importance of this branch of perfumery may be indicated by the quantity of flowers annually grown in the district of Cannes. Flower harvest: orange blossoms, 2,475,000 lb.; roses, 530,000 lb.; jasmine, 100,000 lb.; violets, 75,000 lb.; acacia, 45,000 lb.; geranium, 30,000 lb.; tuberos, 24,000 lb.; jonquil, 5,000 lb. The quantity produced at Nice has not been ascertained; with violets and orange there are more, but with cassie less than here stated.

The market season for orange-flowers at Nice lasts for more than a month, as an average, and during that time there are sold about fifteen to eighteen tons of flowers daily; and a ton of flowers will yield more than a kilogramme of otto (say forty ounces), worth £20 sterling; and the residuary water, highly saturated with odour, is worth another ten pound note.

A surface of land, equalling an acre of planting, yields a hundred and eighty to two hundred pounds weight of flowers, valued as an average at two francs the pound. Violets may always be looked upon as an extra crop, growing as they do under the orange and lemon trees. The kind grown in the double Parma. About twenty-five tons weight of violet-blossoms are produced annually at Nice.

In France, the commerce in perfumes has risen to the annual value of £3,000,000 sterling.

RUSSIAN CANNON.—The *Invalide Russe* says:—"A fourth enormous cannon in iron was lately cast at Petrozavodsk, in Russia, on the American system, viz., by cooling the inside with water. In a rough state those guns weigh 2,000 pounds (32½ lb each), and when finished 1,200. Their diameter is 15 inches, and they are more than 12 feet long. They throw balls weighing 398 lb. This gun, when tried, bore a very heavy charge of powder, and produced a most destructive effect on a plate of iron of considerable thickness, particularly when shells cast in hard metal were used. These cannon cost one sixth less than those in steel, and yet the system has never been adopted except in America and at Petrozavodsk."

THE consumption of fuel constitutes so important an item in public and private expenditure, that it is satisfactory to note the steps that are being actively taken to test the powers and properties of petroleum as a substitute for coal and coke. With this object in view, the Government have at present under consideration an arrangement effected by Mr. Richardson C.E., for utilizing petroleum to supersede other kinds of fuel for steam purposes. The Admiralty engineers

have reported favourably on Mr. Richardson's system of fire-grate for burning the oil on an extensive scale, and the authorities of Woolwich dockyard are about to investigate its merits. The use of petroleum need involve no apprehension of danger from combustion, unless the oil be heated to a temperature of 80 or 90 degs. Fah. During a course of experiments at Woolwich, it was elicited that the effect of a red-hot shot passing through the petroleum tank of a ship of war would be simply to vaporize the oil, the vapour harmlessly escaping unless brought in contact with a flame. The oil could even be used as fuel after the petroleum spirit had been extracted from it.

FACETIE.

THERE is a man named Peck, in Lewes, who has two and a half bushels of children—ten little Pecks.

WHAT is the difference between a good soldier and a fashionable young lady; and replies, "One faces the powder, and the other powders the face."

SARAH JONES says the reason why woman has her way so much oftener than man is, that both he and she are conscious that her way is the best.

A FEW days ago a lively minnow was found in some milk, at Worcester. The attention of the milkman was called to the strange fact, but he "couldn't account for it."

SHE HAD HIM THERE!—"Madam," said a gentleman to his wife, let "me tell you, facts are very stubborn things." "Dearie me, you don't say so," said the lady: "what a fact you must be!"

IRISH POLITENESS.—Two ladies and Mr. Thaddens O'Grady were conversing on age, when one of them put the home question, "Which of us do you think is the elder?" "Sure," replied the gallant Irishman, "you both look younger than each other."

A QUAKER, on hearing a man swear at a particularly bad piece of road, said, "Friend, I am under the greatest obligation to thee. I would myself have done what thou hast done, but my religion forbids me. Don't let my conscience, however, bridle thee; give thine indignation wings, and suffer not the prejudice of others to paralyze the tongue of justice and long suffering—yea, verily."

A NEW acrobatic idea has sprung up in Paris. A M. Strelzenbach, at the Cirque Napoléon, performs with his wife in an acrobatic way, in the same fashion as the tumblers have hitherto done with their sons and younger brothers—to fling them up and down with their feet. It is not very gallant, but a novel way of courting the applause of the Parisians. They seem to like the idea, and applause is ample from the male married portion.

CAPTAIN W. C. HENDERSON, of the Glasgow ship *Minnehaha*, has been presented by the President of the United States with a gold watch, in acknowledgment of his services in rescuing the master and twelve of the crew of the American barque *Waverley*, of Maine, from the wreck of that vessel. This rescue took place on the 9th of January, 1862, during the voyage to Cape Town. A slow watch that.

THE PITMAN AND THE TIME-GUN.—A pitman, who had not been in Newcastle for a year or two, was lately standing near the northern entrance to the High Level Bridge, when off went the time-gun, and back fell our hero in a fright. "What's that?" he exclaimed, on recovering from the roar. "Oh," was the quiet answer, "it's only the gun striking one." "Maw sang!" said he; "but aw wadn't like to be here when it's striking twelve!"

CHARLEY R.—as genuine a Patlander as ever left the "old sod," being in our village for a few days, went home one day with the post-master to dinner. Being rather early, the worthy P.M. said,—"Mr. R.—, if you are fond of music, my daughter will play something." "Indade, and I'm not," answered Charley. "Why," exclaimed our P.M., "you don't mean to say, do you, that you have no ear for music?" "Oh, not at all," said Charley. "I am fond of it, and like some piece very much, especially 'Patrick's Day'; but my greatest trouble is to know when it's played."

DUMMY WITH A CONJUROR.—A good story is told of the elder Mathews and the late Mr. Yeates, who, when travelling together, once found themselves at a provincial inn without any means of amusement for themselves, though no persons were more highly calculated to amuse others. A game of whist would suit exactly, but where were they to obtain partners? On consulting the landlord, he knew of one person, a good player, who was then actually in the house. A polite invitation being sent through the waiter, the stranger joined the two comedians; preliminaries were at once settled, and they sat down to play, the stranger taking dummy. There never was such bad luck on one side and good on the other. Dummy won

every game; till at last the stranger, consulting his watch, said that he must cease playing, as he had an important engagement to attend. "But," exclaimed the others, "you surely will give us our revenge—some chance of regaining our losses." "Certainly," replied Dummy, "I will either at a later hour to-night, or to-morrow." "And pray," said Yeates, "what pressing business can you have now at seven o'clock in the evening?" "Oh!" replied the stranger, with a shrewd twinkle of his eye, "I am a professional, like yourselves. I am G—, the conjuror, and I am now going to perform." The stranger bowed himself out of the room; and though neither Mathews nor Yeates could detect any malpractices in his play, they unanimously agreed to waive any further proceedings regarding winning the money back from the conjuror.—"Hotten's History of Playing Cards."

THE SAME WITH A DIFFERENCE.—An Irishman asked a friend, "Will ye dine with me to-morrow?" "Faith, an' I will, with all my heart," was the reply. "Remember, 'tis only a family dinner I am asking ye to." "And what for not; a family dinner is a mighty pleasant thing. What have ye got?" "Och! nothing by common! Jist an illephant piece of corned beef and potatoes." "By the powers! that bates the world. Just my own dinner to a hair—barring the beef!"

GOLDEN EGGS.

Herr Herrman, having worked out the golden mine of Constantinople, left for Smyrna, en route for Egypt and India, with his budget of conjuring wonders. The day before leaving, however, he performed an *ad fresco* trick, which, though trifling in itself, is amusing enough in its result to be worth mentioning.

Returning in company with a friend from the bazaars he met a Jew egg-hawker near the Stamboul end of the bridge, and, stopping him, asked the price of his eggs.

"Thirty paras a-piece," said the Jew, "for they were all fresh laid this morning."

"Very good," said Herrman. "I will take a dozen at the price."

The nine piastres were accordingly paid, and the conjurer then proceeded to crack one of the eggs. The result did not bear out the Jew's avowal as to their freshness; but Herrman, nothing daunted by the smell, slowly chipped off the top of the shell and fished out a sovereign from the centre of the odorous yolk. To the amazement of the Jew he did the same with a second and third—which both proved as rotten as the first—and was taking up a fourth, when Moses flung back the nine piastres, shouldered his creel, and scuttled rapidly off, declaring that he would not sell at the price.

Herrman and his companion slowly followed, and after a while came up with the Hebrew in a quiet corner of the neighbouring mosque-yard, where they found him hard at work breaking his eggs. Another offer was made for the whole, but though more than a dozen had already been sacrificed without the expected sovereigns turning up, the Youti refused business, and was left deliberately smashing the whole contents of his basket in search of the golden deposit.

REV. MR. K— was stationed at Appleton, Wis., and was very much annoyed on the first Sabbath by the whispering and other improper conduct of some young gentlemen present. He stopped his discourse, and, fixing his eyes upon the offenders, said:—"I very much dislike to reprove any one in a congregation where I am not acquainted, as I am afraid of making as great a mistake as brother R— once made at F—. While preaching his first sermon, he was very much disturbed by the misconduct of an individual in the congregation, who, though several times reproved by brother R—, only behaved the worse for it throughout the whole sermon. As brother R— was leaving the church after the services, one of the brethren accosted him with, 'Brother —, didn't you know that man you reproved to-day was a fool?' It is needless to say the nuisance was then abated."

"THE LORD'S NO DEAF."—A poor old deaf man, residing in Fifeshire village, was visited one day by the parish clergyman, who had recently taken a resolution to pay such visits regularly to his parishioners, and therefore made a promise to the wife of this villager that he would call occasionally and pray with him. The minister, however, soon fell through this resolution and did not pay another visit to the deaf man till three years after, when, happening to go through the alley in which the poor man lived, he found the wife at the door, and therefore could not help inquiring for her husband. "Well, Margaret," said the minister, "how is Thomas?" "Nae the better o' you," was the rather curt answer. "How—how, Margaret?" inquired the doctor. "On, ye promised two years syne to ca' and pray ance a fortnight wi' him, and ye never ance darkened the door sin syne." "Well, well, Margaret, don't be so short."

I thought it was not necessary to call and pray with Thomas, for he's deaf, you know, and cannot hear me." "But, sir," rejoined the woman, "the Lord's no deaf," and the indolent clergyman shrunk abashed from the cottage.

AN ASTONISHED WOMAN.—A loquacious gentleman finding himself a passenger in a stage coach, with no one but a very prim and taciturn maiden lady of some forty winters, endeavoured in vain to engage in conversation. At length night came; as nothing was said, both fell asleep. The stage finally stopped, and the driver announced to the lady that she had arrived at her place of destination. Her fellow-passenger being awakened at the same time thought he would compel the lady to exchange a word at leaving, and addressed her: "Madam, as we shall never again, probably, sleep in the same room together, I bid you a respectful farewell." A scream, and silence reigned again.

"LOVE ME, LOVE MY DOG." ILLUSTRATED.—Lieutenant Dennistoun, of her Majesty's ship *Trident*, which has just been paid off at Woolwich, received from the crew of the ship a somewhat strange testimonial. Personal manifestations in the shape of presents to officers being strictly against the rules of the service, the ship's company found a way to carry out their designs without infringing the regulations. Accordingly, a silver collar was provided for Lieutenant Dennistoun's dog, on which was engraved, "Presented to the dog Shot, as a mark of respect and esteem for his master."

TAKING A CUP TOO MUCH.—A certain charming lady, called Mdlle. Charlotte, who gives the most delightful supper parties in Vienna, was about to retire one night when her maid entered her room in great consternation, telling her that a theft had been committed in the house. Mdlle. Charlotte, much alarmed, asked what had been stolen. "A tea-cup," was the reply. The mistress laughed, and said that most likely the maid had broken it. The latter persisted that this was not the case, and on being further pressed, owned that he had seen a certain M. de— put it in his pocket! A moment's reflection revealed to the fair super-giver the nature of this strange robbery. M. de— was one of her most ardent admirers, and the cup, by one of the many new appliances of photography, was ornamented with the owner's portrait! It is needless to say that the thief was not prosecuted.

THE CONTENTS OF A BISHOP'S POCKET.—Everyone has lately read of the Bishop of Bath and Wells sitting down, after making a speech, upon his episcopal shovel hat, but it is not half so good an adventure as occurred to one of his predecessors, and which is founded upon fact. It appears that upon one occasion the bishop referred to dine with one of his neighbours about Christmas time, and, among other delicacies, was a turkey and sausages. A footman, who had an eye for the latter, removed one or two links of them (which he placed in paper) as he took the dish through the hall, but being disturbed, dropped the parcel into the pocket of the first great-coat he found. Unable to secure his stolen prize, the sausages were left in the pocket, and were not discovered until the following day, when the bishop had to attend a school meeting. After addressing the children in a pious strain, and having provided himself with some religious tracts to dispense among them, he wound up his address by expatiating upon their merits; but, unfortunately, instead of taking out the contents of his left pocket, he brought out those of his right, and exposed to the gaze of the children a small string of pork sausages.

A NEW ARM OF THE SERVICE.—A novel corps is about to be added to the gallant volunteers who have formed to defend, if necessary, their native land. It will be embodied under the name of the *The Beer Engineers*, and will be trained to the performance of a special service in the defence of the public.—*Punch*.

LINCOLN TO HIS ARMY.

Our noble soldiers, please to understand, Canada ain't, at present, Dix's Land.

Punch.

VERY SHABBY.—*Rival*: "There, if you don't give me one, I'll tell your brother, 'cause I saw you kiss Charley Turner, just now, in the refreshment room."—*Punch*.

POOR LETTER II.

Tout Contractor (who has been paid a shilling per man, and sees his way to a little extra profit): "Now, look 'ere, you two H's! The public don't want yer—nor I don't, for nobody don't: so jist drop them boards, and then 'ook it!"—*Punch*.

LEX TALIONIS.—When the celebrated Donato arrived in town, he found himself the subject of legal proceedings. Somebody, who ought to have known, but didn't, informed us that his dancing was against the law. "What law?" we asked. "What law?"

my friend, "why, the *Legs Tagliani's*, of course."
—*Punch*.

FASHIONABLE NEWS.—The fashionable papers speak of the great success this year of the *Ayr* annual Christmas county ball. We are not surprised when we hear this here about that *Ayr* ball, for, of course, it was "kept up" if it was in *Ayr*.—*Fun*.

JUST LIKE HIS IMPUDENCE.—Old Abe threatens to increase his naval force on the Canadian lakes. It is to be hoped our Government will not be deterred by any mistaken delicacy from doing the same. The pink of politeness is not required for the lake boundary of Canada, but the scarlet of marine jackets will define it capially.—*Fun*.

RAILWAY MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNMENT CONTROL.—We understand that the appointment of a select committee of the House of Commons will be moved for immediately after the assembling of Parliament, for the purpose of inquiring into the whole question of railway management, and for considering whether any and what steps are necessary with a view to their being made more conducive to the interests of the public. The motion will, we are informed, receive the support of Lord Stanley, Mr. Horner, and Mr. Roebuck; and it is further stated that the proposal will not be opposed by Her Majesty's Government.

A NEW LOCOMOTIVE.—A new electro-magnetic locomotive has been invented by MM. Bellet and De Rouvre. This new engine is intended to run on rails, and the arrangements of its parts is somewhat curious. The driving power is given to a single pair of wheels situated at the rear of the engine, as in the Crampton engines. A number of magnets are arranged radially on these wheels, their poles towards the circumference; the voltaic current is conducted from the centre of each wheel to all the magnets in succession, and these latter act directly on the iron rail itself. The inventors seem to have specially in view the postal and telegraphic service. They say:—"This machine may be employed to carry letters and parcels in the interior of towns at the rate of twelve or fourteen miles an hour, on subterranean railroads, connecting the principal post-offices; and as the locomotives for such service would be very small, the works would be comparatively inexpensive. Larger machines might run on the existing railroads, and convey despatches at the rate of a hundred and twenty miles an hour."

CAKE-TAKEN OF THE LIVE OF THE FRENCH EMPEROR.—TAKEN now, with an apparently confirmed dynasty and a supine people, when the elect of thirty-five millions is seen driving a two-horse drag, like a perfect gentleman, to the Bois, he is under the anxious and studied protection of the police. Those two young men in fashionable attire, cantering a little ahead, are police agents; that middle-aged gentleman riding with a lady, some fifty paces behind, is another; small knots of apparent loungers are on the watch along the ride; and an armed force would start up at the first sign of suspicion or alarm. When a ball was given to the emperor and empress at a distinguished embassy, the list of invitations was carefully revised by the prefect or his sub, who, not satisfied with having some of his people stationed in the antechamber, insisted on cards of invitation to enable others (dressed and decorated for the purpose) to mingle with the company. When the emperor honoured the Baron de Rothschild, by joining a shooting party at his château, the entire establishment was placed under strict surveillance the preceding fortnight, and when his Imperial Majesty took the field the neighbouring country was *cerné* like a besieged town.

DANGER OF EATING UNCLEAN WATERCRESES.—In cress prepared for the table I have noticed portions of frog's-bit (*Hydrocharis Morous-rana*) and other weeds. These vegetables have often small mollusks and other aquatic animalcules adhering to them, and if the former are eaten in an imperfectly washed state, it will consequently happen that the latter are swallowed during the meal. Small mollusks are known to harbour larval parasites in prodigious quantities, and therefore it is not unreasonable to conclude—bearing in mind the extent of our knowledge of the transformations which these parasites undergo—that they are, at least, the source of one or more of the snake parasites which occasionally invade our frames. The following case will best illustrate my subject:—A young girl, the daughter of a shepherd living at Kapitz, in Bohemia, was in the habit of eating watercresses, and drinking stagnant water of ditches in the locality where she lived. After a while her health failed, and her body became much enlarged. A medical man, Dr. Kichner, saw her only three days before she died, and by a post mortem examination, he ascertained that no less than forty-seven specimens of small flukes (*Distoma lanceolatum*) had taken up their residence in this inappropriate "host." I say

"inappropriate" because the parasite species in question has only three times been detected within the human "host;" its proper habitation being, apparently, the liver of the ox and sheep.—*Popular Science Review*.

CHURCH DECORATION IN PARIS.—The sum of £11,584 has been devoted to the decoration of the new church of St. Augustin. The interior of the cupola is to be illuminated with large figures, sixteen in number, of prophets, saints, and fathers of the church, surrounded by cherubims, on a blue ground, studded with golden stars: in the pendentives are to be painted the four evangelists, accompanied by angels: the vaultings of the side chapels are to be painted with six subjects from the lives of St. John, St. Peter, and St. Paul. Stained glass, enamelled medallions beneath the porch, and sculpture will be largely used.

LINES WRITTEN IN A BEAUTIFUL MOONLIGHT

SWEET moon, I love thee, yet I grieve
To gaze on thy pale orb to-night,
It tells me of that last dear eve
I passed with her, my soul's delight.
Hill, vale, and wood, and stream were dyed
In the pale glory of thy beams,
As forth we wandered, side by side,
Once more to tell love's burning dreams.
My fond arm was her living zone,
My hand within her hand was pressed,
And love was in each earnest tone,
And rapture in each heaving breast.
And many a high and fervent vow
Was breathed from her full heart and mind,
While thy calm light was on her brow,
Like pure religion's seal and sign.
We knew, alas! that we must part,
We knew we must be severed long,
Yet joy was in each throbbing heart,
For love was deep, and faith was strong.
A thousand memories of the past
Were busy in each glowing breast,
And hope upon the future cast
Her rainbow hues—and we were blest.
I craved a boon—oh! in that boon
There was a wild, delicious bliss—
Oh, did'st thou ever gaze, sweet moon,
Upon a more impassioned kiss?
The parting came—one moment brief
Her dim and fading form I viewed—
'Twas gone—and there I stood in grief,
Amid life's awful solitude.
Tell me, sweet moon, for thou canst tell,
If passion still unchanged is here—
Do thoughts of me her breast still swell
Among her many worshippers?
Say, does she sometimes wander now
At eve beneath thy gentle flame,
To raise to heaven her angel brow
And breathe her absent lover's name?
Oh, when her gentle lids are wet,
I pray thee, mark each falling gem,
And tell me if my image yet
Is pictured tremblingly in them?
Ay, tell me, does her bosom thrill
As wildly as of yore for me?
Does her young heart adore me still,
Or is that young heart changed like thee?
Oh, let thy beams, that softest shine,
If still my love to her is dear,
Bear to her gentle heart from mine
A thought, a blessing, and a tear!

L. F. D.

GEMS.

THOUGH love cannot dwell in a heart, friendship may; the latter takes less room—it has no wings.

WHEN we hear that a friend has detected some fault in us, we are always disposed to do him the same favour.

A HANDSOME woman pleases the eye; but a good woman pleases the heart. The one a jewel, the other a treasure.

It is only the useless, aimless, repining life which is an ignoble one; a life of occupation and labour is generally one of enjoyment also.

Love and friendship are the two last roses of life, but too many thorns lurk in them; they draw our blood and give us poison.

WOMEN often lose the man they love, and who loves them. By mere wantonness or coquetry they reject, and then repent. They should be careful not to take

this step hastily, for a proud, high-minded, gifted man will seldom ask a woman twice.

EVERY man cherishes in his own heart some object—some shrine at which his adoration is paid, unknown to his fellow mortals—unknown to all save his God.

NEVER seek to be entrusted with your friend's secret, for, no matter how faithfully you may have kept it, you will be liable in a thousand contingencies to the suspicion of having betrayed it.

SIX first is pleasing, then it grows easy, then delightful, then frequent, then habitual, then confirmed; then the man is impatient, then he is obstinate, then he is resolved never to repent, and then he is ruined.

STATISTICS.

DURING the year 1864, we paid, upon an average, from 60,000*l.* to 70,000*l.* a month for foreign eggs.

CHRISTMAS FARE DELIVERED BY THE GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY.—The following is a list of Christmas fare delivered at the London station of the Great Eastern Railway from the 19th to the 26th of December, 1864:—Oxen, 2,263; sheep, 7,094; calves, 163; pigs, 578; turkeys, 12,117; geese, 16,768; ducks, 922; hares and pheasants, 1,289; flour, sacks of, 13,940; beer, kilderkins, hogsheds, and barrels of, 9,090; oranges, boxes of, 1,160; dried fruit, boxes of, 5,413; nuts, bags of, 720; oysters, barrels of, 5,011; ditto, in bags, 72 tons; almonds, boxes of, 163; potatoes, sacks of, 10,926; meat, packed in hampers, 418 tons; poultry, 348 tons, fish, 340 tons, milk 76,896 quarts; Stilton and other choice cheese, 1,421

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Broomfield Ragged School at Bradford has been, with the consent of her Majesty's Government, constituted a reformatory for the reception of juvenile criminals.

THE Vienna journals state that the King of Prussia has sent a splendid Christmas-tree to the children of the Emperor of Austria. It remained exposed to view for some days in the Imperial palace.

AN omnibus drawn by a locomotive, instead of horses, is now running at Chantenay, in the South of France. It can be turned and stopped with ease; and both inside and outside passengers travel by it without fear.

A MOST important sale by auction is announced in the Portuguese papers to take place at Lisbon on the 16th of January and following days, consisting of the libraries of the convents of Estramadura, sold by order of the Government.

"CESAR'S LIFE" is to be published simultaneously in French and German; a staff of translators are said to be hard at work upon it. Another account in a French paper says the work is again shelved. The public appetite has been whetted enough; it will soon belost.

THE fifty-fifth part of "The Encyclopedia of Arts and Sciences" in the Welsh language has been published. This work is interesting, as it will doubtless be the last attempt on a large scale to promote the education of the people of Wales by means of the vernacular. Wales is rapidly becoming Anglicized by railways and the influx of English wealth.

THE Prince of Wales's memory will be a cherished souvenir in many parts of Canada for years to come by all who came in contact with his Royal Highness. It was a little seed sown without much trouble, and will produce a large crop of loyalty. In many places we hear that his Royal Highness's birthday was kept as a public holiday.

BABY SHOW.—On Tuesday, at the new school-room, this "novelty" from Yankeland was conducted under the management of a select few of Kingsclere "commoners," when there were three prizes to be given. The infant progeny appears small in the parish, only seven being entered for the "show." The first prize was awarded to a plump little sucker named Leach, son of John Leach, who resides near the new church; and the second prize was given to a baby aged eight months, son of David Pike, a shepherd; the third and last prize being awarded to a son of George Smith, labourer, aged four months. None were to be exhibited over twelve months old, and the prizes, which were given by a child, consisted of first, a nicely-made pelisse for the winner's wear; second, a piece of print to make a frock, &c.; third, a pair of woollen socks. The intrinsic value of the prizes was but small, but then the fun of getting up the "show" was large, and a great many mothers attended. We have not heard whether it will be continued. A concert wound up the day's proceedings. Babies will be at a premium next year at Kingsclere.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. R.—See the answer to "Zenobia" in present number.
 Miss F. A. W.—Your very kind offer is declined with thanks.

JAMES AND FREDERICK.—The sovereign cannot degrade a peer; that can be done only by an Act of Parliament.

HARRIET SAN MARTIN.—We must beg to direct your attention to the notice at the foot of this page; the conditions under which we receive MSS. being there fully stated.

ELEANOR K.—The best material for cleansing porcelain is fuller's earth, very finely powdered. The handwriting is tolerably good.

G. IVRA.—We must beg to decline the poem entitled "Welcome to the New Year," the lines having reached us much too late.

T. P. D.—You can only obtain an exact knowledge of the contents of the will by reading it at Doctors' Commons. You will get permission to do this by purchasing there a probate stamp, at the cost of one shilling.

ALICE.—You must write, stating explicitly the grounds on which you claim a pension, to His Royal Highness Field-Marshal the Duke of Cambridge, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief, Horse Guards, London.

COMEDIAN.—When the violin has been properly coloured, it should be well rubbed with common rushe, and then varnished with seed-lac varnish, or shellac varnish; though sometimes a sufficient polish is produced by frequent rubbing with linsed oil and woollen rag.

T. N. C. and J. G.—The correct quotation (and you will find it in *Hudibras*, Part III, canto 3) is:—
 "He that complies against his will,
 Is of his own opinion still."

HENRY W.—In No. 63 there is a recipe for making ink of the desired description. The derivation of the word itself is this: Among the Romans a writing fluid, which only the Europeans might use, was called *eucaustic*; thence came the Italian *l'acchiostro*, the French *encre*, and the English ink.

H. H.—A brunette, eighteen years of age, 5 ft. in height, having light brown hair, and hazel eyes, lively, affectionate, and good-tempered, would be happy to correspond matrimonially and exchange *cartes* with a gentleman, who must be respectable, and under twenty years of age.

MISS V. is very disconsolate at not having hitherto met with a gentleman whom she could accept as a husband. Is eighteen years of age, with brown hair and eyes, and rather tall. Any gentleman replying must send his *carte* as a preliminary.

JEANETTE.—To promote the growth and strengthening of the hair, Dr. Erasmus Wilson has prescribed the following: Eau-de-Cologne, two ounces; tincture of cantharides, two drachms; oil of rosemary and oil of lavender, of each ten drops.

WILLIAM, who is twenty years of age, fair, of medium height, and highly respectable, would like to obtain a matrimonial introduction to an agreeable lady about eighteen or nineteen years of age. He has an income of £100 a-year, and would wish the lady to be also possessed of some means. (Handwriting requires careful practice.)

B. G., who is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, having dark hair and moustache, and of a loving disposition, would be glad to enter into a matrimonial correspondence with any young lady who is respectable, domesticated, and capable of making home happy. (A lady residing in or near Liverpool preferred.)

C. S.—You are under a wrong impression, for you may use spectacles without weakening the eyes; indeed, if these aids to vision are properly selected, they afford the greatest assistance and comfort to both short-sighted and long-sighted persons, and may be worn for several years without diminishing the natural power of sight.

ZENOBIA.—The following wash is recommended for a blotched face:—Rose water, three ounces; sulphate of zinc, one drachm. Mix, wet the face with it; then gently dry the face, and touch over with cold cream, which must be gently dried off. (See further the reply to "Jeanneton," which may possibly answer your purpose also.)

ISABEL WILSON, twenty years of age, having light brown hair, and very dark blue eyes, fond of music and dancing, not accomplished, but domesticated, having charge of her father's house, would be glad to enter into a matrimonial correspondence with a gentleman, who must be rather tall (good looks not essential), must have dark hair and eyes, and be between five-and-twenty and thirty years of age. A foreigner not objected to.

MAK.—There is no royal road to learning, nor is there any special method for becoming famous; where there is real genius, it will achieve distinction in its own way. If you have a decided talent for sculpture, you might, being self-taught, endeavour to obtain the patronage of some eminent lover of the art, who would, probably, on proof of your merit as a sculptor, take pleasure in bringing your work before the public.

S. R. L.—As a remedy for rheumatism (and, indeed, for sprains and bruises also), the following is efficacious:—Take one raw egg, well-beaten, half a pint of vinegar, one ounce of spirits of turpentine, a quarter of an ounce of spirits of wine, and a quarter of an ounce of camphor. Amalga-

mate well together, place in a bottle, shake for ten minutes, then cork tightly to exclude the air. In half-an-hour it is fit for use, and should be applied vigorously two or three times a day as an embrocation.

T. M. A.—If you so strongly suspect that your grocer supplies you with adulterated articles, why not deal with other? By the following means, however, you can detect whether there is any copper adulteration in either the green tea or pickles:—Put a few leaves of the tea, or some of the pickle out small into a phial with two drachms of liquid ammonia, diluted with one-half the quantity of water. Shake the phial, when, if the minutest particle of copper be present, it will change the liquid to a fine blue colour.

NAEMI, who is seventeen, of middle height with brown curly hair, grey eyes, fresh colour, good-tempered, lively, and very affectionate, very fond of music and dancing, possessing a knowledge of French and Italian, and very domesticated, would be pleased to correspond with a gentleman, with a view to matrimony; he should be tall, about twenty-one years of age, and possessed of sufficient means to keep a wife comfortably. "Naemi" (who would have no objection to "James," in 57, or "Cecil," in 58) will inherit £5,000 at the death of an aunt.

HENRIETTA is anxious to procure a partner for life. At present fills a public situation in the Irish metropolis, with a salary of £120 per year, which will shortly be very largely increased. Is 5 ft. 6 in. in height, with fair hair and moustache, blue eyes, twenty-one years of age, and considered good-looking. The lady's age must be from seventeen to twenty-one; she should have dark hair and eyes, and have received a good, sound education (if musical preferred), and not be above looking after the household duties of her future home. *Carte de visite* requested.

THE OPAL'S ORIGIN.

A dew-drop came, with a spark of flame
 He had caught from the sun's last ray,
 To a violet's breast, where he lay at rest,
 Till the hours brought back the day.

The rose looked down, with a blush and frown,
 But she smiled all at once on his view,
 Her own bright form, with its colouring warm,
 Reflected back by the dew.

Then the stranger took a stolen look
 At the sky, so soft and blue,
 And a leaflet green, with a silvery sheen,
 Was seen by the idler too.

A cold north wind, as he thus reclined,
 Q' sudden gazed around—
 And a maiden fair, who was walking there,
 Next morning an opal found.

W. W.

MISTLETOE and HOLLY desire to correspond with two gentlemen, with a view to matrimony. "Mistletoe" is 5 ft. 2 in. in height, twenty years of age, of fair complexion, nice colour, golden hair, blue eyes, small mouth, slight figure, and considered very pretty; has received a good education, but has no fortune. The gentleman must be older than herself, and dark. "Holly" is twenty-four years of age, 5 ft. 3 in. in height, of dark complexion, has black hair, grey eyes, small mouth, slight figure, is thoroughly domesticated, and very respectable, but has no fortune. The gentleman must be older than herself.

T. H. P. C.—The date of the introduction of card-playing is not known; it is certain, however, that cards came at some remote period from the East. They were originally covered with symbols referring to life and death, &c. The ancient game of the Indian card-players was a series of interrogative addresses to fate, and not a pastime like our own. Cards were, in fact, the syllabic leaves of the dreamers of the East, who invoked them, and regarded their accidental combinations as oracles of the future. Something of this blind credulity still attaches to cards, as shown in the practices of gipsy and other pretended fortune-tellers.

CHARLES W.—The difference in the usefulness of the "right" and "left" hand seems to be something more than a dexterity acquired by habit. It has been asserted by Sir Charles Bell that a distinction exists not only in the hands and arms, but in the whole body, and that the vital force, or constitutional energy, as well as the muscular power, is greater on the right side than on the left side, which latter is also more subject to the attacks of disease. The conclusion, therefore, is that the preference of the right to the left hand is a provision of Nature, and the result of some peculiarity of physical conformation.

A. W. C.—We never think it, in any degree, troublesome to reply to correspondents who write to us in good faith; and consider it rather a pleasure than otherwise to supply them with such information as they may require, or otherwise further their views. We regard them all as our friends, and only desire, in return for any service which we may have rendered them, that they should speak of us as they find us, and introduce *THE LONDON READER* to their friends. In your case, your object is very laudable; every man should endeavour, not only as a duty to himself but to society, to improve his social position. In default of private influence, we do not know that you can do better than advertise.

L. P.—We believe the usually received origin of the phrase, "These who live in glass houses should not throw stones," is this:—In the reign of James II. the Scotch, who came over with him, were greatly annoyed by persons breaking their windows; and among the instigators of these attacks was Buckingham, the court favourite, who lived in a large house in St. Martin's Fields, his residence having so many windows that it was called the Glass House. The Scotch who had had their windows broken, revenged themselves on Buckingham by breaking his; and on the favourite complaining of this to the king, he rejoined that "those who live in glass houses, Steele, should be careful not to throw stones."

W. W.—The origin of the term "puff," as applied to a newspaper paragraph, is this:—In France at one time it was fashionable to wear a head-dress called a *pouff*, which consisted of the hair raised as high as possible over horse-hair cushions (so to say), and then ornamented with objects indicative of the tastes or personal history of the wearer. For instance, the Duchess of Orleans, on her first appearance at court after the birth of a son and heir, had on her *pouff* a representation in gold and enamel, most beautifully executed, of a nursery; there was the baby, the nurse, the cradle, and a number of playthings. Madame d'Egmont, after her

father, the Duke of Richelieu, had taken Port Mahon, wore on her *pouff* a little diamond fortress, with sentinels keeping guard; the sentinels being made, by means of mechanics, to walk up and down. This *pouff*, or advertisement, for such it really was, is the origin of the present term puff.

BLANCHE and BETTIE MURRAY seem to be two of the dearest little creatures imaginable. "Blanche" is 5 ft. 2 in. in height, rather slight figure, small hands and feet, dark hair, hazel eyes, and with a most captivating, bewitching face. Her age is seventeen. "Bettie" is 5 ft. 4 in. in height, slight figure, fair complexion, golden wavy hair, blue eyes, very long eyelashes, very white and regular teeth, and is considered very beautiful. Her age is eighteen. "Blanche" and "Bettie" are cousins, and, when twenty-one, are jointly to enjoy a fortune left by an uncle. "Blanche" would prefer a gentleman rather tall, not very dark, and not under twenty years of age; "Bettie" would like a gentleman, intellectual, gentlemanly, and true-hearted, with a moderate share of good looks, tall (not under 5 ft. 10 in.). Both gentlemen should have property, yet not would not real wealth be rejected if accompanied by the other requisites mentioned.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—"Lonely James" would like to exchange *cartes de visite* with "Laura."—"Lily H." would like to correspond matrimonially with "Number Twenty-Nine." Is twenty-three years of age, tall, fine figure, good complexion, well educated, and very respectably connected.—"O. J. de R." would be glad to hear further, with a view to matrimony, from either "Laura S.," "Lizzie L. C. S.," or "Lucette S."—"Ocean Spray" would be glad to hear further from "Lillian." Is about the medium height, eighteen years of age, well connected, holds a very good appointment; is good-tempered, of a loving disposition, and would like a year or so's acquaintance.—"Percival" has a very anxious to hear further from "Lillian," but gives no particulars as regards himself—"Lucy" replies to "Domesticate" that she cannot boast of good family, being a tradesman's daughter; but if that makes no difference in his view, will be most happy to correspond matrimonially with him—"Honora C." who is much taken with the description of "James," would be happy to correspond matrimonially with him, and exchange *cartes de visite*. Is seventeen years of age, of medium height, has dark hair, brown eyes, and good complexion; has received a sound education, is domesticated, and has excellent expectations—"Lucia," who is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 1 in. in height, of fair complexion, dark hair, hazel eyes, small mouth, good figure, and considered pretty, is willing to correspond matrimonially with "Basil the Reformer," but would like to exchange *cartes de visite* as a preliminary—"Seak" who is nineteen years of age, has dark brown hair, dark grey eyes, and rosy colour, is 5 ft. 1 in. in height (an orphan, with no fortune), and thoroughly domesticated, would like to correspond matrimonially with "J. D." (No. 83), with a view to an early marriage. I would be happy to exchange *cartes* as a preliminary.—A communication from "Daisy," addressed to "J. W. P.," will receive attention—"Dorcas" is willing to accept "James" (No. 87) for better for worse. Is seventeen years of age, about 5 ft. in height, has dark Auburn hair, dark eyes, is thoroughly domesticated, and would make a loving wife—"W. V. Z.," a young Congregational minister, of good education, dark, and gentlemanly, aged twenty-two, begs to offer himself to "A. M. C.," with whom he would be happy to exchange *cartes de visite*—"A. L. G." wishes to correspond matrimonially with "Rose" and "Lillian." "A. L. G." is 5 ft. 10 in. in height, has black hair and moustache, an excellent temper, considered good-looking, and has a salary of £220 a year. "J. G." is 5 ft. 9 in. in height, has black hair and black moustache, light blue eyes, fair complexion, mild in temper, is considered handsome, and has a salary of £200 a year—"G. R. P.," an intelligent and accomplished young man, a musician, of an amiable disposition, twenty-four years of age, 5 ft. 3 in. in height, fair complexion, and good-looking, would be pleased to correspond matrimonially with "Lillian."—"P. R. H." who is twenty-one years of age, thinks "A. M. C." just the lady to his taste, and would be happy to enter into a matrimonial correspondence forthwith. Is moderately good-looking, has black hair, is highly respectable, possesses a good home in one of the most beautiful little towns in England, and a snug drapery establishment, from which he receives a good income—"Gertrude" a brunette, eighteen years of age, is willing to correspond matrimonially with "Ratlin the Reformer," having always had a great liking for sailors; and "Isabel," who is a blonde, and sixteen years of age, would like to correspond matrimonially with "Harry Leopold W." Both have had a very good education, and are considered good-looking—"A. L. G." offers himself as a candidate for "Lillian's" hand and heart. Is twenty years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, of dark complexion, and good-looking, of respectable family, and in good circumstances, able at present to maintain a wife in a good position in society, and will shortly be in possession of much more ample means—"Highland Jessie" thinks she is just the lady to suit "Number Twenty-Nine." Is a widow, twenty-two years of age, rather below the medium height, of light complexion, has blue eyes and brown hair, of lively disposition, a member of the Church of England, and a general favourite in the society in which she moves. Is thoroughly domesticated, and will make a loving wife—"Louie K." will be happy to correspond matrimonially with "Number Twenty-Nine." Is twenty-one years of age, of the medium height, of fair complexion, has dark brown hair and grey eyes, and a loving disposition, and is very domesticated—"Iron-monger" who is all "Lizzie L. C. S." requires, and holds a situation in a first-class Manchester house (income over £100 per annum), and is a clever, shrewd, business man, wants just such a lady for his wife as "Lizzie," and would be happy to correspond matrimonially.

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